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UNIVERSITY OF ALBERTA

A PHENOMENOLOGICAL INVESTIGATION OF MALE SEXUAL ORIENTATION CRISIS

BY

NANNA MARIA ANGUS

A THESIS

SUBMITTED TO THE FACULTY OF GRADUATE STUDIES AND RESEARCH IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE OF DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

IN

COUNSELLING PSYCHOLOGY

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATIONAL PSYCHOLOGY

EDMONTON, ALBERTA

FALL, 1993

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The undersigned certify that they have read, and recommend to the Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research for acceptance, a thesis entitled "A Phenomenological Investigation of Male Sexual Orientation Crisis" submitted by Nanna M. Angus in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in Counselling Psychology.

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DEDICATION

This thesis is dedicated to all the patients I have worked with who are struggling with the physical and psychological devastation of the HIV/AIDS epidemic. Thankyou for permitting me to share a part of the journey with you. You will not be forgotten.

ABSTRACT

This study used an existential-phenomenological method to investigate the experience of sexual orientation crisis in four young adult males. The purpose was to describe in depth the unique characteristics of this dilemma, in order to provide readers in general, and therapists in particular, with a clearer understanding of the nature of the phenomenon known as sexual orientation crisis.

Individual interviews were conducted with each subject. Data analysis revealed eight key, or essential themes common to all the subjects. Sexual orientation crisis was revealed to be a complex and unusually painful form of identity crisis with existential overtones. Implications for counselling are suggested and the results in relation to current research into biological substrates for sexual orientation are discussed.

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CHAPTER I

Introduction

General Overview

For the past three years my work as a counselling psychologist in a large urban hospital has been primarily concerned with helping gay men adjust to and cope with the overwhelming issues related to having an HIV/AIDS diagnosis. I soon noticed, however, that I was receiving almost as many referrals for young men, mostly in their twenties, who were experiencing considerable anxiety inasmuch as they did not know if they were gay, straight, or bisexual. Although some of them seemed able to "move in both worlds," they nevertheless appeared anxious to establish with more certainty their "true" sexual orientation. I began to wonder if this was an increasing trend - a natural outcome of the sexual revolution and the gay liberation movement of the last two to three decades; or was it instead an issue that was currently becoming more "acceptable" to explore in psychotherapy? Anxious and confused, these young men were in the midst of what can best be described as a sexual orientation crisis. The following is typical of the kind of statement expressed by my patients that has provided the rationale and the impetus for the present investigation:

"I feel I don't really know who I am. I am married and love my wife and infant son more than anything in this world,

yet I am increasingly feeling overwhelmed by homosexual feelings. Lately, I've acted on these feelings. I feel terrible afterwards. I think I should tell my wife I might be gay, but I'm not even sure that I am. What if I give my wife AIDS? I could never forgive myself. I don't want to lose my family. Am I gay? What should I do?"

The Question

This study proposes to explore the following questions: What is the nature and the meaning of sexual orientation crisis as experienced by these young adult males? What is it like to be facing this kind of dilemma at this stage of one's life? On the deepest level, what innermost thoughts and feelings do these young men have regarding this issue, and how is it affecting the rest of their lives? Are there common features to the phenomenon that will help us gain a deeper understanding of their experience so that we in the helping professions can more knowledgeably and sensitively work with these clients? How might this dilemma be resolved? Can it be satisfactorily resolved?

The aim is to gain a better understanding of this phenomenon by using descriptions of this experience gathered through research interviews of four young men who are in the midst of such a crisis. These interviews will constitute the raw data which will be analyzed and interpreted according to the empirical phenomenological method as outlined by Giorgi (1975) and Colaizzi (1978).

To date, almost all research completed on the topic of sexual orientation and homosexuality have been quantitative

studies which have sought to determine questions related to etiology. Extant research has almost exclusively focused upon attempts at confirmation or disconfirmation of various hypotheses regarding causation. Little research has as yet, sought to investigate the experience of a sexual orientation crisis directly from the point of view of the experiencer. As a result, little helpful information is available to counsellors and therapists working with those individuals experiencing this dilemma.

This is not a causal inquiry. I am neither attempting to prove or disprove any theories concerning the etiology of homosexuality, heterosexuality or bisexuality. Rather, this study falls into the broad category of descriptive science (as opposed to explanatory science). Its aims are oriented towards discovery rather than hypothesis testing, although the results of this research may generate testable hypotheses. It is my hope that this investigation will help remedy to some extent the apparent paucity of clinical data on this topic.

Overview of Thesis

Chapter Two is devoted to a review of the literature on the topic of sexual orientation in general, with particular attention paid to critically reviewing extant studies on the topic of sexual orientation crisis.

Chapter Three addresses the issue of methodological choice and focuses upon contrasting the natural science and the human science approaches to research. Particular emphasis will be given to an examination of the philosophical presuppositions inherent in the two paradigms and to the issues of validity, reliability and generalizability as they relate to qualitative research.

Chapter Four describes in detail the particular phenomenological method chosen for this investigation, the criteria for the selection of subjects, and the process of data gathering and data analysis.

Chapter Five presents the results of the phenomenological analyses of the descriptive protocols of the participants in the study. Chapter Six presents a summary and discussion of the results described in Chapter Five, addresses potential clinical and treatment implications, and suggests possible areas for future research.

Definitions

As a result of reviewing the literature for this study, it became apparent that there exists considerable confusion over terminology used in research in the field of sexual orientation in general. For example, the terms "sexual orientation," "sexual preference," "sexual identity," and "gender identity" are frequently assumed to be synonymous in the literature, when in fact there are important distinctions to be noted among the terms. Definitions of the key terms used in this thesis will therefore be included at the onset to avoid any unnecessary confusion for the reader.

Sexual Orientation: A consistent preference for sexual relations with one's own sex (homosexuality), the opposite sex (heterosexuality) or varying degrees of ambivalence about the partner's sex (bisexuality). Sexual orientation implies some combination of four behavioral components: 1) erotic fantasies, 2) sexual activity with others, 3) perceived sense of identity, and 4) social role (Friedman, 1988).

Sexual Orientation Crisis: A continued sense of acute anxiety, distress and ambivalence regarding sexual orientation that persists beyond adolescence (Friedman, 1988).

Core Gender Identity: The sameness, unity, and persistence of

one's individuality as male, female, or ambivalent, especially as experienced in self-awareness and behavior. This sense develops and is consolidated normally by the time a child is two to two and one half years of age. Gender identity is the private experience of gender role, and gender role is the public expression of gender identity (Friedman, 1988).

Childhood Gender Disturbance: Extreme and chronic distress about being a boy/(or girl); repudiation of stereotypically male or female behaviors or activities; gender nonconformity. In males, effeminacy and/or a persistent sense of masculine inadequacy (Friedman, 1988).

Homosexuality: (No universally accepted definition.) Derived from the Greek word for "same" and generically refers to any sexual activity between members of the same sex. Usually implies some combination of four behavioral components: erotic fantasies, sexual activities with others, perceived sense of identity, and social role (Friedman, 1988). Homosexuality as a clinical or diagnostic term is misleading, however, often implying a distinct unity of behavior that does not exist (Kaplan & Saddock (Eds.), (1989).
Bisexuality: Confusion and debate surround attempts at definining this term. Some people believe that only those who have no preference (50:50) for either gender are truly bisexual. Others (eg., MacDonald, 1981) argue this belief is false, stating that only a small portion of bisexuals fall

into the "no preference" category. Rather, to be bisexual according to MacDonald, means that:

> "...a person can enjoy and engage in sexual activity with both sexes and recognizes a desire to do so. Also, though the strength and direction of preference may be constant for some bisexuals, it may vary considerably for others with respect to time of life and specific partners" (MacDonald, 1981, p.25).

CHAPTER II

Review of the Literature

Sexual orientation as a legitimate topic for scientific investigation has been plagued by historico-political, social and moral considerations. Depending upon which era of "scientific research" one examines, we are likely to get disparagingly different points of view regarding etiology, pathology, acceptance, prevalence (gay, straight, or bisexual), and pathogenesis. This literature review focuses specifically on research into homosexuality and bisexuality, even though it is fully acknowledged that it may be just as important to ascertain how an individual becomes heterosexual, and whether or not the process of assuming a heterosexual identity is ever experienced as a "crisis."

The Kinsey Research

The influence of Alfred Kinsey and his associates (Kinsey, Pomeroy & Martin, 1948) in the field of sexual orientation research can hardly be overestimated. Their judiciousness in viewing human sexual orientation as a complex and broad continuum, as opposed to such rigid opposites as "homosexual" versus "heterosexual" represented a major advance in our conceptualization of human sexuality:

> Males do not represent two populations, heterosexual and homosexual. The world is not divided into sheep and goats. Not all things are black nor all things white. It is a fundamental of taxonomy that nature rarely deals with discrete categories. Only the human mind invents categories and tries to force facts into separated pigeon-holes. The world is a continuum in each and every one of its aspects. The sooner we learn this concerning human sexual behavior, the sooner we shall reach a sound understanding of the realities of sex (Kinsey et al., p. 639).

Objecting to the use of the words "homosexual" versus "heterosexual" as nouns labelling individuals rather than adjectives describing behaviours, Kinsey and his colleagues developed their seven point scale (0-6) to describe subjectively homosexual-heterosexual experience and activity with others. Using self-report measures, they found that 50% of male adults were exclusively heterosexual in sexual interest and activity, 4% of the population were exclusively homosexual, while nearly half of adult males (46%) during the course of their adult lives engage in both heterosexual and homosexual activities or react to persons of both sexes in varying amounts (Kinsey et al., 1948).

When Kinsey first published these findings, the general public, having believed that homosexuality was exceedingly rare, was astonished. As DeCecco (1980) has commented:

> These findings of high proportions of bisexuality in

> both sexes were based solely on reports of physical sexual activity and attraction. If sexual orientation were viewed as interpersonal and cultural, as well as physical, one might expect that the existence of heterosexuality or homosexuality as a distinct, unitary, frozen state would be even rarer (p. 57).

Kinsey's findings, which showed that sexual orientation is neither polarized nor immutable, gave empirical support to Freud's (1905) assertion that humans are born as innately sexual beings (that is, as innately bisexual in capacity) - and not as either innately homosexual or heterosexual. Recent biological research, which looks at prenatal factors influencing sexual orientation, may however either dispute or eventually disprove Freud's position, and will be discussed separately.

The Question of Etiology: The Essentialist/Constructionist Debate

Historically, research and theory on homosexuality has concentrated on the etiology of homosexual orientation and remains a dominant preoccupation. Until recently, the results of the studies that have been reported were often inconclusive, equivocal and fraught with ambiguity. Although the purpose of my research, as stated previously, is not directly related to exploring questions related to causation, a synoptic overview of etiological research will be presented since it comprises the majority of extant research related to this topic.

A concise and yet comprehensive overview of etiological research has been effectively accomplished by Risman and Schwarz (1988). These authors divide sexual orientation research into two very broad categories, "essentialist" and "constructionist." Their categories echo what can also be described as another nature/nurture debate. The essentialist viewpoint maintains that each individual has a true, or "essential" core sexual self which is immutable, while the constructionist argues that "homosexual behavior is something which some individuals DO: it is not who they ARE" (Risman & Shwarz, 1988, p.128).

The Essentialist Research

This research looks at three distinct areas regarding the etiology of sexual orientation: early family experiences, adult hormonal imbalance, and prenatal hormonal studies.

As Risman and Schwarz conclude, research has generally not supported a causal link between a pathogenic family environment and the development of homosexuality. Although a few small studies (Apperson & McAdoo, 1968; Newcomb, 1985: van den Aardweg, 1984) have argued for the causal importance of family environmental factors, the basic premise that parents can influence a child's sexual orientation has not been confirmed (e.g., Bell, Weinberg & Hammersmith, 1981; Siegelman, 1981). Bell et al.'s (1981) investigation of nearly 1500 heterosexual and homosexual men is the most widely quoted of these studies. Bell et al. were unable to either support a social learning or a psychoanalytic explanation for the development of homosexuality. Although

their data help confirm the relevance of early family experiences, interview studies such as theirs can reveal only correlational rather than causal relationships. The only tentative etiological conclusion they could draw was that their research provided "no basis for rejecting biological explanations outright" (Bell et al. 1981, p.216).

Seeking biological explanations has been extensive and continues to be a major focus of research into sexual orientation. The early studies that sought to prove that there were adult hormonal differences between homosexuals and heterosexuals have generally been dismissed as weak and inconclusive (Meyer-Bahlberg, 1982; 1984). Other studies investigating the possibility that impaired prenatal androgenization of the brain may influence the development of homosexuality seem more persuasive in their conclusions (Dorner, 1976; Ehrhardt et al., 1985, Money, 1988; Ward, 1972), but have been criticized on the basis that it is presumptuous to conclude that laboratory controlled cross-sex behavior of rats is analogous explaining homosexual orientation in humans. It is important nonetheless to know that an animal model exists in which environmental stressors on the mother affect biochemical processes in the male fetal gonad, thus altering the structure of the brain (Friedman, 1988).

Recently, new scientific research heating up the nature vs. nurture debate has been widely reported in the press and the media (Edmonton Journal, March 25, 1992; The Atlantic Monthly, March, 1993). These new studies seem to offer

persuasive evidence for a biological explanation for sexual orientation. Most compelling are the findings of Simon LeVay (1991) of the Salk Institute for Biological Studies in California. Dissecting the brains of 41 male and female cadavers (19 were gay men, 16 were heterosexual men, and six were heterosexual women), Levay found that one of four cell groups within the anterior hypothalamus was more than twice as large in the heterosexual men as it was in the females and the homosexual men. This area of the brain is known to be important in regulating male-typical sexual behaviour.

Soon after, Bailey and Pillard (1992) of Boston University released their study of concordance rates in twins which showed that if one identical twin is gay, the other is more than twice as likely to be gay than if the twins are fraternal (52% concordance in identical twin brothers, versus 22% of fraternal twins, versus 11% of genetically unrelated (adopted) brothers.) The researchers noted that this is exactly the kind of pattern one would see if there was a genetic component involved.

Other current researchers however, do not believe that sexual orientation is genetically determined, but rather that it is an in utero event (Watson & Coren, 1992). Their work supports the conclusions of the earlier studies by Dorner and Erhardt discussed above.

Sociological studies reflecting the essentialist viewpoint argue that the cross-cultural consistency of homosexual incidence rates as well as the consistency worldwide of gay male culture provides strong evidence for a

biological substrate for sexual orientation. Whitam and Mathy (1986) studied gay male cultures in such diverse countries as Guatemala, the Philippines, Brazil, and the USA and found that such traits as creativity, theatrical skills, interest in the arts, and cross-gender interests are widely shared by homosexual men across national and historical boundaries. Since they could find no universal familial pattern for homosexuality, they concluded that biological explanations were plausible.

In summary, it appears that the exact nature of the complex biopsychosocial relationships between brain differentiation and the development of eventual sexual orientation remain to be definitively elucidated.

Critique of Essentialism

In light of the recent research being reported, I can only take a guarded approach in attempting to offer a critique of the essentialist position. Risman and Schwarz (1988) refer to Hoult's (1984) review of the biological research. Hoult maintains that animal research into homosexuality cannot conclusively be presumed to be equivalent to human homosexuality. Furthermore, Blumstein & Schwarz (1977) caution against adopting the position that every human being has a "core sexual orientation." As Risman and Schwarz (1988) state regarding Blumstein and Schwarz' research:

> ... we need to move away from essentialist reifications of sexual types, towards a kinetic model of sexual desire. Fundamental categorical desire may not even

> exist. Rather, culture creates understandings about sexuality and determines whether people are capable of only one focus or have the ability to eroticize both sexes at various points in the life cycle (p.129).

DeCecco (1981) contends that in spite of Kinsey et al.'s (1948) plea to view sexual orientation as a continuum on a broad scale which can fluctuate over a lifetime, most studies continue to assume that homosexuality and heterosexuality are immutable polar opposites and that sexual orientation is dichotomous and permanent.

But what of the 46% of individuals who could be classified as bisexual according to Kinsey? MacDonald (1981), noting the paucity of scientific data on bisexuality, points out that scientists have seriously confounded their research on homosexuality by including large numbers of bisexuals in their studies. It is as if the entire phenomenon of bisexuality has been ignored by researchers. He notes that since there is some evidence that sexual orientations do sometimes change, "we cannot even generalize beyond the time of data collection" (MacDonald, 1981, p.25).

Bisexuality is characteristically viewed by many heterosexuals and particularly by homosexuals as a form of homosexual denial (Klein, 1978; Harry & Lovely, 1979). Bisexuals are perceived to be gays who have not yet "come out;" individuals who adopt a bisexual label to avoid being stigmatized as a homosexual. There appears to be ongoing dispute over whether true bisexuality even exists, or whether it should be viewed as a "pseudo-orientation." Clearly, the

entire subject of bisexuality is one in need of further investigation by researchers interested in the complex topic of sexual orientation.

The Constructionist Research

Risman and Schwarz (1988) report that the constructionist perspective is one that views sexual orientation as the result of highly complex environmental and social experiences. Love object choices are the result of idiosyncratic personality factors, social learning, and cultural norms (nurture) rather than a biologically determined phenomenon (nature).

Constructionists are not as concerned with answering the question of why a particular sexual orientation develops as they are in ascertaining how it is individuals come to label themselves as gay or lesbian (Cass, 1979; Coleman, 1982; Dank, 1971; Malyon, 1982; Weinberg, 1978; 1983; Troiden, 1979; Troiden & Goode, 1980; Minton & McDonald, 1984). These researchers are interested in studying the coming out process and in identifying predictable and orderly "stages" associated with that process.

Dank (1971) first identified distinct "stages" of coming out, describing the average time of self-definition as gay to be approximately six years. Weinberg (1980), on the other hand, focused on the difference between "doing" and "being" gay, and maintained the process of self-definition may take up to nine years. According to Weinberg, there is a distinct difference between an individual openly adopting a gay lifestyle ("doing"), and becoming aware of the idea that one

is gay ("being"). This is analogous to the idea that there are two potential tasks of identity in the coming out process: coming out to oneself, and coming out to others. The former may occur, but not necessarily the latter (Weinberg, 1980).

Cass (1984) and Furnell (1985) proposed a four-stage coming out process, while Coleman (1982) discussed a five-stage process based upon a psychodynamic framework. Malyon (1982), referring to homosexual identity acquisition as a "sociogenic anomaly," points out that most homosexual males do not integrate a homosexual identity until their twenties, or later. He proposed a bi-phasic process involving a pre-coming out stage and a coming out stage. The coming out stage represents "a period of intense psychological and social change characterized by the disorienting and uncomfortable urgency of needs, conflicts and priorities, which, in many instances, have been latent for a decade or more" (Malyon, 1982).

Critique of Constructionist Research

In their critique of the constructionist literature, Risman & Schwarz (1988) point out that these researchers have failed to take into account the important question which asks how erotic preference originally develops:

> The reason for an initial attraction to a same sex partner is often left unexplained while the social management of a homosexual preference is explored. The constructionists have thus far stopped short of what seems the arduous next step,

> the development of a more general sociology of desire (p.131).

Just as the polarity of homosexual versus heterosexual typifies the dichotomous approach of extant research, it also appears that the literature has become further divided into the opposing camps of another version of the nature/nurture debate.

Phenomenological Research into Sexual Orientation

To my knowledge, there are no existing qualitative studies that have investigated the question this research intends to explore. Rector (1982) completed a doctoral thesis entitled "The Acceptance of a Homosexual Identity in Adolescence: A Phenomenological Study" which aimed at exploring the process of homosexual identity formation of adolescent boys. Although he claims to be doing a phenomenological study, he begins by setting up four hypotheses which the study will attempt to "prove" or "disprove." The setting up of hypotheses however, is completely at odds with the philosophical foundations of the phenomenological method, where the very thing the researcher seeks most strenuously to avoid, is a priori construction of hypotheses in advance of the data analysis.

Rector's study could be more accurately described as "quasi-phenomenological" in that he used a combination of standardized questionnaires and semi-structured interviews of 35 subjects to gather his data, the results of which he analyzed for correlations using standard statistical

measurement techniques. Rector concluded that the majority of his subjects had successfully assumed a homosexual identity by late adolescence. This study, in contrast, focuses upon the dilemma that was presented earlier in the definition of a sexual orientation crisis (i.e., a continued sense of acute anxiety, distress and ambivalence that persists beyond adolescence (Friedman, 1988) (Italics mine).

CHAPTER III

The Foundations of Method

Introduction

In choosing a method to study a question relating to a particular phenomenon, the primary concern of the researcher should be careful reflection on the nature of the question s/he seeks to explore. Keen's (1974) statement: "We are all native phenomenologists" (p.3) implies that whether we adopt a natural science or a human science approach, we all experience our worlds individually, interpret and reflect upon our individual experiences, and try to gain understanding of these unique experiences.

This chapter begins by contrasting the philosophical assumptions inherent in the natural science as opposed to the human science research in psychology. Considerations involved in adopting phenomenology as the methodological choice for this thesis will be discussed, and the particular phenomenological method employed will be discussed. The phenomenological method will then be evaluated in terms of such important issues as validity, reliability and generalizability.

Philosophical Assumptions of Natural Science Research in Psychology

The history of psychology credits Wundt's experimental laboratory of 1879 as giving birth to psychology's adoption of experimental science methodology. Since then, scientific psychology has proceeded with the assumption that it, like any other science deemed legitimate, be guided by the rules of experimental methodology. Human behavior was viewed as being mechanistic, quantifiable, and causally determined. Inevitably, mainstream psychology found itself in the position of having to force its subject matter to conform to a pre-existing methodology, rather than developing methods appropriate to its subject matter (Aanstoos, 1984).

Within the social sciences in general, and psychology in particular, research has meant quantitative study - a search for order as revealed through the amount of change in one variable or factor when another is altered. Essentially, the approach of psychological research has been characterized as being: empirical, positivistic, reductionistic, analytic, predictive, quantitative, and objectively analyzed for cause and effect relationships by an independent observer (Giorgi, 1970). The assumption is that data obtained from human beings either conforms to or can be made to conform to these criteria and that most questions concerning human behaviour are responsive to measurement.

In natural science research, human behaviour is divided into manageable units or constructs. Constructs are "operationalized" by being carefully defined in an attempt to eliminate subjectivity. Ideas or questions generate testable hypotheses. Studies are undertaken in an attempt to prove or disprove certain theories. Experimentation or investigation is completed under controlled conditions, such as a laboratory in an attempt to control the influence of extraneous variables. The aim is to achieve reliability, that is, predictability and replicative consistency. The difficulty is that the meanings of quantitative results are sometimes ignored while human experience is frequently transformed into "brute data," including only those aspects of experience that can be measured (Taylor, 1979).

A further problem is that of the initial operationalization of the construct(s) one seeks to measure. In the preceding chapter it became apparent that there exists disagreement and confusion in the research literature over such definitions as "sexual orientation," "bisexuality," "gender identity" etc. Sexual orientation, for example, is rarely defined conceptually and in about half the studies defined only operationally. In fact, the Kinsey heterosexual-homosexual scale is used in less than 20% of the studies surveyed despite the plea for depolarization of the phenomenon (DeCecco, 1980).

Stigliano (1986) has proposed that modern social science is in a state of crisis. He suggests that there has been a loss of faith in the natural science promise to develop laws

of human behaviour, "that empirical social science either ignores the moral nature of human action, or ignores meaning, emotion, and purpose. Human life is too complex to be reduced to a set of variables regressing to a mean" (p. 34). Underlying the entire approach of natural science, then, is the Cartesian assumption that there is an objective, knowable world that exists apart from the individual human mind. It is this basic assumption that the phenomenological method of research most strenuously seeks to challenge.

Philosophical Assumptions of Phenomenological Research in Psychology

Phenomenology, a movement that has its origins in philosophy, is still in the midst of being conceptually and methodologically clarified. There are numerous interpretations of phenomenology among the philosophers themselves, as evidenced in the writings of Husserl, Heidegger, Merleau-Ponty and Sartre (Kockelmans, 1967). Within phenomenology, Husserl's assertion that consciousness is always consciousness of something has been a common theme (intentionality). While Husserl focused on the intentionality of consciousness, Merleau-Ponty and Sartre stressed the intentionality of behaviour, of a person's basic relatedness to the world. The belief that the world as constructed by the physicist is more "real" than the world we perceive was called by Merleau-Ponty "the prejudice of the objective world" (1962). In his work, The Phenomenology of

Perception, Merleau-Ponty (1962) stated:

> All my knowledge of the world, even my scientific knowledge, is gained from my own particular point of view, or from some experience of the world without which the symbol of science would be meaningless... Science has not, and never will have, by its nature, the same significance qua form of being as the world we perceive, for the simple reason that it is a rationale or explanation of that world (p.8).

Sartre (1943), echoing the same theme, wrote of man as a relational being to his world, and that "the principle of their being is the relation" (p.50). This relation, referred to in phenomenology as "co-constitutionality," is a fundamental acknowledgement and philosophical springboard for the phenomenological approach to understanding human experience.

Perhaps the most critical philosophical distinction between phenomenology and the natural science paradigm is phenomenology's assertion that we are of the world rather than in the world (Valle & King, 1978). Intentional behaviour is directed toward the world, it acts on the world and reveals the world to man. There is always an inseparable unity in the perceiving act and the perceived object. Each one "co-constitutes" the other. Hence complete objectivity, which is a human idea, becomes an empirical impossibility when applied to the study of human behaviour (Angus, 1988).

From the phenomenological point of view, the primary task

of psychology is to describe and reflectively analyze the world of human lived-experience (the "Lebenswelt" as Husserl termed it). Husserl's oft-quoted maxim "Unto the things themselves" reflected this concern for the importance of one's lived-experience (Husserl, 1913). Husserl's primary concern was with the structures of human consciousness based largely upon his own self reflections. By systematic and rigorous description of conscious experience Husserl initially thought that he could achieve a pure phenomenology of consciousness. He later developed this line of thinking to the point where he spoke of transcendental phenomenology - a very congnitively oriented phenomenology which, to some commentators, suggests a disembodied consciousness that stands in marked contrast to the embodied consciousness of Merleau-Ponty and Sartre.

Heidegger disagreed profoundly with Husserl's attempt to reach a form of pure phenomenology because he believed that all human action occurs within the context of existence and is therefore avowedly interpretive. He saw no point in the herculean efforts of Husserl to have phenomenological method transcend existence. Heidegger's view formed the basis for existential-phenomenology and opened up the whole of human existence to phenomenological investigation. Because Heidegger believed that an exact science of phenomenology was impossible his work has been characterized as hermeneutic (interpretive) phenomenology (Spiegelberg, 1982).

Methodologically, then, the task of the phenomenological psychologist is to study the meaningful coherence of

experience as it is lived in the everyday world. Rather than quantification, this task is seen as better served by the adoption of a descriptive approach.

Phenomenological researchers have called for an approach radically different to that of natural science methodology, so that psychology, set free from the bonds of natural science methodology, might yet become a "human" science (Alapack, 1975; Becker, 1986; Colaizzi, 1978; Giorgi, 1975; Halling, 1983; 1989; Osborne, 1990; Polkinghorne, 1986). While natural science is an explanatory science, phenomenological research is a descriptive science. Natural science seeks objectivity through control and prediction; phenomenological research aims at the elucidation of meaning and understanding through descriptions of individual human experience.

Methodological Options

There is no one prescribed methodology for phenomenological research. It would be antithetical to the very purpose and philosophy of phenomenology to tie it to the yoke of any one particular method. Because the task of the researcher is to go back to the phenomenon as it appears in itself - that is, to regard everything that is given in experience precisely as it manifests itself to an individual's consciousness in his/her lifeworld, the method or approach to the data interpretation must remain flexible and open.

This is not to say that no guidelines for phenomenological methodology are being developed. Aanstoos (1985), Becker (1986), Colaizzi (1978), Giorgi (1987), Wertz (1988), are among human science researchers who do concern themselves with developing methodological strategies in descriptive research that address such considerations as validity and reliability, without compromising the philosophical integrity of the basic tenets of phenomenology (Granit, 1981).

An Outline of Three Phenomenological Methods

Phenomenological researchers generally use three major variations of the phenomenological method: the individual, the reflective empirical, and the dialogal. Generally,

researchers using the individual method use their own actual and imaginary experiences and those of others (both factual and fictional) to develop a thematic description of a phenomenon. "Co-researchers," a term some phenomenologists prefer over the word "subjects," are not directly involved in this approach. The ability to write effectively and the gift of a finely honed intuition seem prerequisite to this particular method (Alapack, 1975).

The empirical reflective and the dialogal methods are similar in several ways. Both types of studies engage subjects, or co-researchers, from whom descriptions are elicited. Both begin with an individual phenomenological report by the researcher, contain a thematization of all the descriptive protocols, and conclude with an extensive thematic description of the phenomenon. There are, however, differences between the two methodologies. Typically, the empirical phenomenologist examines the descriptions and is solely responsible for thematic abstractions obtained from the data.

By contrast, the dialogal phenomenologist interviews the co-researchers, thematizes during the interview (as well as alone) and involves the co-researchers in that process (Granit, 1981). The dialogal school places a heavier emphasis on the intersubjective nature of meaning and experience. Empirical reflective researchers, on the other hand, attempt to prevent their own perspectives from influencing the respondent by minimizing contact and not discussing their own points of view with the co-researchers.

Both types of researchers try to avoid biasing the respondents, one by keeping the researcher's personal perspective hidden, the other by revealing it during the dialogal interview process.

The Rosenthal studies showed that the effect of the researcher on research subjects cannot be neutralized in either experimental or in phenomenological research, so the best alternative is to involve the participants and train them to be reliable evaluation instruments (Combs, Richards, & Richards, 1976). Though dialogal researchers may discuss their own ideas with the co-researchers, they adopt a careful attitude of "letting be" - of respecting the integrity of the response of the participant as a fully representative sample of his/her experience with the phenomenon.

Empirical reflective and dialogal research are both "empirical' in the sense that they are "based on the data of immediate pretheoretical experience" (Wertz, 1984, p.32). Their aim is to disclose meaning through reflection. It is not a matter of the researcher imposing meaning, for..."reflection is not speculation, but genuine finding, requiring the most rigorous grasp of the essence of the phenomenon. The researcher thereby grasps the whole of the phenomenon through the part expressed by the subject, making explicit the implicit root of the matter" (Wertz, 1984, p.32). For the purposes of this investigation of sexual orientation crisis in young men, the empirical reflective method as proposed by Giorgi (1975) and elaborated by Colaizzi (1978) was chosen. The reasons for this choice will

be discussed in the following chapter.

Evaluating the Phenomenological Research

Phenomenology has been criticized for being too subjective, introspective, "merely" the study of individual cases (i.e. non-generalizable), anti-scientific, speculative, and lacking rigour and method (Giorgi, 1984). Prior to adopting any methodology, "scientific" or otherwise, the researcher must critically evaluate whether or not the chosen method is most suited to answer the research question(s) posed. Within the natural science paradigm, research is typically evaluated according to its , reliability, validity and generalizability. Since phenomenological methods are derived from an alternative scientific paradigm and based on different metatheoretical assumptions, these traditional evaluation criteria should be re-examined (Granit, 1981).

Reliability

In natural science studies, if experimental procedures and conditions are identical the same physical results are expected. However, in human science studies that are concerned with meaning rather than experience that has been transformed into "brute data," reliability has a quite different meaning. The data in phenomenological research are transcriptions of experience in the form of a texts or protocols that are analyzed for meaning structures rather than physical properties. Frequency counts of the magnitude and duration of phenomena are not part of phenomenological

research, but can be part of content analysis. There is no point in applying test-retest reliability checks to interviews because of their dynamic nature. Taylor (1979) points out that human beings are self-defining in terms of meanings that are in a constant state of flux. Therefore human sciences can never be other than ex post facto sciences where natural science conceptions of reliability are inappropriate. Nonetheless, it is possible to achieve consistent convergence of meaning in the phenomenological analyses of interview data because such reliability is based upon sameness of meaning rather than sameness of physical fact.

Reliability in phenomenological research is based upon the observation that human perception is perspectival and contextual. Multiple perspectives on the same phenomenon converge and overlap to produce a sameness or unity which yields sameness of meaning in spite of factual variability (Wertz, 1986). This sameness forms the basis for intersubjective agreement which transcends variable facts and leads to a unified description of the phenomenon.

The major threat to both reliabilty and validity lies in the interpretative process for, as Kvale (1983) notes, the researcher can "read the data as the devil reads the Bible" (p.175). There is no absolute interpretation of the data since ambiguity is an intrinsic aspect of meaning. The best a researcher can do is to remain aware of his/her biases while arguing a particular interpretation as persuasively as possible, and support those interpretations by references to

the data. The final judgement then remains with the reader.

Validity

Whereas validity in natural science research refers to the adequacy of the operationalizing process, in phenomenological research it concerns issues relating to representation and interpretation of human experience. In order to determine whether the derived descriptive analyses are accurate, "one must determine the accuracy of the measuring instrument, which in this case is the researcher" (Granit, 1981, p.15). In phenomenological research there are four ways in which this can be done.

First, the researcher brackets his/her orientation to the phenomenon by making explicit any foreunderstanding and biases that he/she holds before the analysis of tha data proceeds. The exact steps of the chosen method are described as are the procedures used in the data analysis so that the reader has a clear understanding of how the interpretation was arrived at, even though the reader may disagree with the researcher's interpretation.

Second, the researcher can check interpretations for goodness of fit with the co-researchers or subjects in the study both during the data collection and the interpretation phase of the research. Sometimes participants may reject the researcher's interpretations even though they may be valid. Such situations can result from participants' defensiveness (e.g., denial, rationalization, transference etc.). For this reason this second method of assessing validity is suggestive rather than definitive (Osborne, 1990).

Third, the most critical means of assessing validity of phenomenological interpretations is through the juridical process of presenting convincing and coherent arguments to members of the research community. The essential structures of the phenomenon which arise from the researcher's intuitive skills must be a faithful reflection of the phenomenon to which the data refer and be able to bear the critical scrutiny of other researchers (Wertz, 1984).

Fourth, the final test of validity is dependent upon the extent to which the final description resonates with the experiences of other people, not in the study, who have experience with the phenomenon (Shapiro, 1986). Phenomenological research, rather than being generalizable in the statistical sense of the term, seeks empathic generalizability. In this sense, empathic generalizability is an indispensable outcome of phenomenological research if it is to avoid the charge of excessive subjectivity and solipsism.

More researchers are now proposing a synthesis of qualitative and quantitative approaches in psychological research (Firestone, 1987; Gendlin, 1962; Howe, 1988). Miles and Huberman (1984) indicate that the two paradigms are not as differentiated in practice as they are in theory. They call for the use of a more "ecumenical epistemology," one that combines the greatest strengths of the two approaches in whatever ways most fully address the question(s) under investigation.

CHAPTER IV

The Method

This chapter begins briefly reiterating the rationale for undertaking this study. I will then describe the specific procedures adopted, the criteria for subject selection, and outline the manner in which the data were collected and analyzed. Finally, I shall address the issue of bracketing as it relates to this investigation.

Rationale

As has been stated, extant research has failed to provide a deeper understanding of what it means to be in the midst of a sexual orientation "crisis." The most illuminating descriptions of this phenomenon are not found in the scientific research, but often in popular gay works of fiction such as Holleran's Dancer from the Dance (1978), or nonfiction such as Fisher's The Gay Mystique (1976). Fisher, for example, offers the following description of "coming out to oneself":

> The person who thinks that he might be gay is not likely to embrace the idea with much joy at first. He knows that society strongly disapproves of homosexuals, he may have guilt feelings himself, and he can assume that life is likely to be more difficult as a homosexual... He may

> view his behavior as part of a phase that will someday come to an end, or he may feel that with a great deal of self-control and determination, he can develop the heterosexual interest that he presently lacks. Many homosexuals go through an enormous inner struggle before finally accepting a homosexual identity and lifestyle... (p. 23).

The primary purpose of this study, then, is to investigate in depth, this inner struggle.

The Subjects

The criteria for subject selection are an important concern for the phenomenological researcher. Participants are selected according to their first-hand experience with the phenomenon as well as their ability to describe in verbal or written form their immediate and personal experiences of the phenomenon being studied. Becker (1986) encouraged researchers to strive for subject homogeneity if possible (e.g., age, sex, educational level etc.), arguing that the data obtained from such a group usually provides the researcher with a deeper understanding of the structure of the phenomenon under investigation. Others (Aanstoos, 1983; Alapack, 1973; Wertz, 1984), found that extreme contrasts among subjects were more helpful in achieving the same end.

The four subjects who agreed to participate in this study can be described as relatively homogenous in several aspects. Firstly, they had all been referred to me for counselling specifically in order to explore issues related to anxiety

about sexual orientation. Secondly, all four of the subjects were adults, ranging between the ages of 21-30 years of age. One subject (age 30) was married and the father of an infant son, while the three others were young men in their early to late twenties.

Adolescent males were excluded for two reasons. First, it is a common fact that many adolescents experience a period of sexual orientation confusion. Kinsey et al. estimated that 37.5% of males under nineteen had one or more homosexual experiences (1948); while Pillard (1974) estimated the figure to be 35% for males under nineteen. Clearly, not all these boys eventually adopt a homosexual identity, if Kinsey's 4-6% estimate of adult male homosexuality is accepted. By late adolescence, this issue is generally resolved for most heterosexuals and homosexuals. Secondly, subjects in their twenties seemed more aware of the broader implications of their dilemma. For example, they expressed considerable anguish over the realization that a homosexual lifestyle would in all likelihood render it impossible for them to ever have a wife or children of their own - a concern of less acute anxiety for boys still in adolescence.

All four subjects were experiencing or had experienced intimate sexual relationships with members of both sexes and remained unsure as to their "true" sexual orientation at the time the interviews for the data collection occured.

Procedure

Preliminary reflection suggested that the "Empirical Reflective" method outlined by Giorgi (1975) and Colaizzi

(1978) would be suitable for researching this topic. Each subject was interviewed for approximately one and one half to two hours using an unstructured interview format. Good rapport, emotional intimacy and a high level of trust and mutual respect had been established between myself and the subjects before the interviews took place. Each interview was tape recorded with the permission of the subjects and was subsequently transcribed in its entirety. All names in the transcripts were changed as were any details that might reveal the identity of the participating subjects.

Data Analysis

Listed below are the steps, or levels of data analysis that were followed in analyzing the interview transcripts of each subject according to the Empirical Reflective method (Giorgi, 1975):

1. Following the live interview, each taped interview was listened to in its entirety to get a sense of the overall impact of the subject's experience with the phenomenon. At this first level of analysis, the researcher seeks to gain an overall impression or gestalt of the subject's experience as it unfolded in the actual interview.

2. The researcher then reads each typed transcript in its entirety several times. Close attention is paid to such considerations as the nature of and the temporal order of the experiences discussed, to any repeated statements, and to the particular words the subject chose to describe his thoughts.

3. Phrases and sentences (meaning units) are then extracted from each transcript that the researcher intuits

are revealing of an aspect of the person's experience of the phenomenon. This process is referred to by Colaizzi (1978) as "extracting significant statements." For example, one subject stated: "I suffered at the hands of the other kids - there was a lot of name calling: Wimp, Weakling, Fifi - stuff related to having feminine qualities." Each time the researcher picks out a statement as significant, h/she interrogates him or herself by asking "What does this statement reveal about this man's experience of sexual orientation crisis?" This important initial discrimination process represents the essence of phenomenological enquiry.

4. Two levels of interpretive abstraction were applied to each excerpt in formulating the psychological meaning of the subject's experience. The first level involved transposing the meaning of the excerpt into psychological language. For example, the above statement from level three was paraphrased as : "P. recalls the suffering over name calling by peers who perceived him as appearing too feminine." The second level of interpretive abstraction involved formulating theme(s) which capture the essence of that particular excerpt. In the above example, the extracted themes for that statement became : Labelling by Peers, Emotional Pain, and Shame.

5. The themes were then clustered or grouped into dominant (major) as opposed to secondary (minor) themes for each subject. (Third level of abstraction). A theme might become dominant, for example, if it frequently appears in the data analysis, or if it is a singular but particularly powerful and evocative example of that subject's experience.

6. The results of the analysis of each subject's experience (within persons analysis) was then synthesized into a comprehensive written description of the phenomenon for that subject.

7. The thematic clusters for each subject were then compared in order to identify those themes that were common to all four subjects (across persons analysis).

8. Finally, the researcher reflects further on the major themes emerging from all four descriptions to develop a final level of analysis. A fundamental description is synthesized revealing the common or shared structures of the phenomenon as a whole in order to share its essential features with the research community.

The Issue of Bracketing

Bracketing is an important component in phenomenological research. Basically, bracketing is a process of self-reflection whereby researchers identify their foreunderstandings, presuppositions and biases toward the phenomenon under investigation and make them explicit prior to undertaking the formal data analysis. For example, bracketing could involve researchers asking themselves how it is they became interested in the phenomenon in the first place. Phenomenological researchers must paradoxically be both prepared, yet open and receptive, knowledgeable yet naive, using each subject's description to immerse themselves freshly in the situation just as it was lived by the subject. The researcher slows down, lingers, "patiently dwelling" in the description, allowing the immanent structures and meanings to reveal themselves (Giorgi, 1975).

Bracketing is always a relative concept since a purely presuppositionless description is never possible in an absolute sense. Nonetheless, by carefully examining and explicitly stating their conscious biases, researchers provide a frame of reference for the reader's understanding of their interpretations of the data. My presuppositions and "biases" regarding this research project are outlined therefore as follows:

1. As a researcher in the social sciences, I have always found nature/nurture questions to be intrinsically exciting fields of enquiry. Sexual orientation is, like intelligence, a topic I find fascinating to explore, given the ambiguity

which remains in the literature.

2. As a result of having worked as a psychologist who deals primarily with gay men, I have had the opportunity to ask many of them first hand whether they believe homosexuality to be biologically innate or environmentally determined. Without exception, they have told me they feel that they were "born that way" - that being gay is at the core of their biological identity, an integal part of who they have always been. Even though many have felt they may have wished to be heterosexual, it was not a phenomenon over which they sensed they had any "choice." Having heard so many of them attest to this, and in view of the biological research most recently appearing from natural science studies discussed in the literature review, I must cautiously state that my bias with regards to etiological issues leans towards a biological substrate for homosexuality. However, the reader is reminded that this study is not seeking directly to either confirm or disconfirm nature/nurture issues, but seeks instead to explore the nature of the sexual orientation crisis itself, regardless of etiology.

3. On a more personal level, there are two factors that have contributed to my interest in this topic. When I was in my late twenties, I had the experience of being the closest confidante to a male friend, who had twice broken off engagements to be married due to his painful emotional struggle with sexual orientation issues. I remember feeling profound empathy for him mixed with my own sense of helplessness in being unable to help him resolve his dilemma

in any satisfactory way. At that time, I believed homosexual impulses to be environmentally learned and supported his search to find the therapeutic "cure" he was so desperately seeking - a belief I now view as ignorant and lacking in true understanding.

4. As the mother of two adolescent sons, I have wondered what it might be like if one of my own sons were to experience the kind of dilemma the four participants in this study were experiencing. How would I respond and cope with this situation and how could I help my son? In spite of this being a relatively common phenomenon, it remains in many ways a topic that has not professionally yet "come out of the closet," given the paucity of counselling information and research devoted to this topic.

CHAPTER FIVE

Results and Discussion

This chapter presents the individual descriptions of each of the four participants. The descriptions include: personal biographical information; an interpretive analysis of each subject's experience presented in tabular form; and an overall synthesis of each subject's experience. Finally, an integrative reflective analysis is presented. Here the central themes from the protocols are compared for differences and similarities, resulting in a generalized description of the essential themes of the phenomenon as a whole.

Richard

Personal Information

Richard is twenty five years of age, has a B.A. in psychology and works as a suicide prevention counsellor. At the time the interview was conducted, he had experienced five female partners and two male partners. He was presently involved in a six-month long relationship with a man. He was referred to me for counselling regarding confusion over sexual orientation issues and was seen for a total of thirteen sessions. The interview for this study was conducted early on in the course of his therapy with me.

Richard is the younger of two sons. His older brother he described as straight. His father had been diagnosed as a paranoid schizoprenic and was currently hospitalized for this condition. Richard became more acutely aware of wanting to

explore his sexual orientation issues after being tested for the HIV virus which proved to be negative.

The excerpts taken from the trancribed interview with Richard are presented in the first column of Table 1. They appear in the order in which they occurred in the interview transcript. The second column in Table 1 represents the first level of interpretative abstraction and contains paraphrases of the meaning of the excerpt. The themes which were formulated to reflect the essence of the excerpts (second level of interpretative abstraction) are presented in the third column. In Table 2, the themes (second level abstractions) are clustered into more essential themes (third level of abstraction). The numbers which appear in brackets below each theme represent the specific excerpts from Table 1 which compose the thematic cluster. Following Table 2, the overall synthesis of Richard's experience is presented. The numbers in parentheses used in the syntheses refer to those excerpts taken from each subject's individual interview. The same procedure was used for the remaining three subjects.

Table 1
First Order Thematic Abstraction of Richard's Experience

	Excerpts from Transcribed Interview	Paraphrases	Themes
1.	When I came to see you at first I was dealing with a lot of loss - of having to choose one lifestyle over the other. That involves losing a lot of hope that you built your life up to have. Children, and a family. That was very difficult to accept. It still is.	Awareness of loss issues and of the necessity of choosing. "Choosing" homosexuality means giving up hopes and dreams of children and family. (Sees the dilemma as a "choice") Consciousness of pain of accepting potential loss remains.	Existential necessity of choice. Awareness of losses. Grief of renunciation.
2.	My early childhood was a very secure time. Certainly no problems that I could see in our family. We were quite well to do. I had a very happy childhood.	Idealized early childhood memories. Safe, secure, happy.	Early idealized childhood.
3.	When I was 8, we moved to Canada from the States. That's when my childhood ended for me.	Childhood ended dramatically at age 8 with a move to Canada from the U.S.A.	Dramatic family rupture.
4.	I can remember vivid scenarios of my mother being very emotionally upset and crying an awful lot.	Vivid memories of his mother being very emotionally upset at this time.	Mother as Vulnerable. Emotional Mother.
5.	After we came to Edmonton, that seemed to spawn the real paranoia of my father. He got a lot worse then. He became much more suspicious and introverted - unsociable.	The move is associated with the loss of his father and his happy childhood. Father's schizophrenia become apparent.	Lost Father. Abandonment by Father. "Crazy" Father.

6.	My father was very awkward all the time. He was always distant, always kind of awkward. We had Saturday morning wrestles and that kind of thing, whisker rubs and stuff, but he always seemed kind of awkward, kind of weird. I remember thinking as a kid he's a little weird.	Memories of father as "distant" and "awkward" in spite of father's attempts to relate. Remembers thinking of his father as "weird." Memories of physical contact with Father.	Distant Father. Father as "weird," strange. Physical Contact with Father.
7.	I just feel intensely sad for my mother. She would really break down and cry, quite hard. Very very emotionally upset.	Early identification with mother's sadness and grief.	Identification with Mother. Empathy for Females. Emotional Mother.
8.	My older brother is similar to my father. He's kind of awkward and a very very insensitive person. He's not very aware at all.	Describes older brother as similar to his father: awkward and "very" insensitive, lacking in awareness.	Brother as masculine. Himself as "the different son - the sensitive one." Sibling Rivalry.
9.	So I felt much more kinship with my mom. I kind of felt like I had to look out for her a little bit, yet not really because I realized I was just a kid. I can remember saying to myself "Come on, you're only 12 years old here, you're not your mother's dad!"	Identifies with mother. Takes on role of surrogate spouse, yet senses that this is not entirely appropriate for a 12 year old boy.	Surrogate spouse to Mother. Role ambivalence. Identification with Mother.
10.	I'm an adult when she needs me for support, but I'm a child when she wants me to make sure the mother/son thing is still in place.	Mixed roles in his family - Is to function both as a supportive adult and yet also as a child.	Confusion over contradictory roles. Surrogate Spouse.

11.	I was looking through old report cards a week ago. Teachers said I was very much the class clown; I was very irritating to the teachers, but I still pulled off marks. B's and A's.	Recalls his role with his peers as being that of a clown - the class comedian. This annoyed his teachers, but he still performed well academically.	Clown role as coping mechanism. Reaction Formation.
12.	My father, again because of his paranoia, never ever trusted anybody. Everyone had their turn as the boogey man. My mother was a boogey man. He claimed she was trying to poison him.	Father's paranoia created an atmosphere of mistrust in his childhood environment. Growing awareness of the implications of his father's mental illness.	"Crazy" father. Dysfunctional family environment. Distrust of Men/Father.
13.	There is a hallmark of shame about my dad's illness in the family. At a certain point I decided I can either sit here and drive myself insane about it, or I can just say I'm not buying into this.	Family's shame regarding father's schizophrenia. He decides to "not buy into" the shame, or he too might be "insane."	Shame. Secrecy. Dissociation of self from family. Defensive Distancing from Father.
14.	I really did just divorce my father. It was like I didn't even really consider him my father. People would ask me about my dad and I would tell them he's either living in another city or that he was dead. It was easier than to explain.	Solution was to emotionally divorce his father. Tells people that his father is either dead or living elsewhere if they inquire about him.	Divorces Father. Father as nonexistent. Defensive Distancing from Father.
15.	I couldn't talk to dad about anything in my life. He became awkward and uncomfortable.	Remembers never being able to talk to his father. Intimacy made father uncomfortable.	Intimacy dysfunction with father. Men as Awkward.

16.	Finally, he was hospitalized and diagnosed as schizophrenic when I was 14 or 15.	Father is diagnosed and hospitalized when he is in his mid-teens.	Abandonment by Father. (Physical and Emotional)
17.	That's where my sense of humour really helped out as a defence in order to cope.	Awareness of developing humour as a defense mechanism to deal with emotional pain.	Clown role as defense mechanism. Reaction Formation.
18.	You know, to divorce myself from my father was not really a very traumatic experience. I could tell my buddies about the crazy things my dad was doing and we'd all have a good laugh about it. Some situations <u>were</u> funny. Dad was really haywire sometimes.	Sees the "emotional divorce" as not especially traumatic.Turns a frightening and difficult experience into a shared humorous event, thereby bonding with his friends.	Rationalization. Suppression of true emotions. Defensive Distancing from Father.
19.	Early on, I remember riding on my dad's shoulders - there were lots of physical things with dad, but later I realized I have no real memories of anything else with him.	Nostalgia for earlier memories of a healthy father. Only memories of him are physical ones.	Idealized early memories of Father. Early Erotic attachment to Father?
20.	I just accepted it. Like my friends weren't particularly close to their fathers either. I couldn't see my friends sitting down and talking with their fathers either.	Acceptance of "the way it is." Rationalizes by sensing that no one else was very close to their fathers either.	Rationalization of loss of Father.
21.	I haven't seen my dad now for over two years. To be perfectly honest, I think he may be dead. He hasn't called us in months.	Does not know if his father is dead or alive at this point.	Lost Father.

22.	When I was growing up and he was sick, he would sit down in the basement, which was unfinished, for days and weeks - no sunlight, nothing, and hardly ever come upstairs. Eventually mom threw him out.	Memories of father's strange behaviour. Father isolated, alone, in the dark. Mother eventually removes Father from the home.	Abnormal family environment. Father Dysfunction. Mother as Capable One.
23.	Maybe if I found out for sure he was dead, I would have some feelings bubble up. There's a part of me that looks at all this and it makes me want to cry.	Realizes he does carry some grief about his father. "A part of him" is aware of this.	Repression has been only partially successful. Grief.
24.	But then for myself, I just can't cry about it. I just can't get sad about it. It's just "My father's dead," as far as I'm concerned. He's never been much of a dad to me.	But another part cannot grieve for the father he feels he's never had. It's easier to view him as "dead."	Emotional suppression as coping mechanism. Ambivalence toward Father.
25.	My earliest memories of being attracted to a male figure was when I was very young, maybe 6 or 7. I was attracted to a man in a cigarette ad in a magazine. I didn't realize it was a sexual thing - I just thought it was a healthy attraction.	Recalls first memory of being attracted physically to another male. Did not understand then that the attraction was sexual, but viewed it as a healthy admiration of an ideal male role model.	Early Homoerotic Ideation. Prehomosexual awakening. Unawareness of sexual implications.
26.	He was standing on a beach in blue jeans looking right at the camera - very stern, very straight, and I just thought he was very masculine. Like the Marlboro Man.	Ideal male = stern, straight, masculine. The Marlboro Man embodies this ideal to him.	"The Marlboro Man" Idolization of Ideal Masculinity.

27.	I kept the ad in my desk drawer for several years - until I was 12 or 13. I remember thinking "what an attractive person - the kind of person that could be my friend" kind of thing. He seemed so cool, so attractive.	Keeps this picture in his desk drawer for several years. Young boy wishes this strong attractive man could be his friend.	Longing for a strong male figure. Prehomosexual Awakening.
28.	I can remember masturbating to the picture when I was 11 or 12.	Recalls sexual fantasies and masturbating to the picture. Fantasized bonding with the ideal male.	Cathexis of Idealized Male through sexual fantasy.
29.	I was an early bloomer as far as sex was concerned. I started early so I could inform everyone else about sex and what to do. "Hey guys - it's free too!"	Remembers himself as sexually precocious. He was the one who informed his friends about his discovery of sex and how good it was.	Sexual precocity.
30.	I can remember thinking of myself as extremely unattractive. I remember a lot of other kids would really bully me. Right through high school, I often felt quite afraid.	Regarded himself as "extremely" unattractive physically. Remembers being bullied by other kids throughout school. Recalls how fearful he felt.	Negative self-image. Bullied by peers. Fear of rejection, social isolation.
31.	They'd start in the morning telling me how after school they were going to make me bleed very badly and hey were going to beat my head in and that kind of stuff. All through the day they would remind me that "this is coming Richard, this is coming." I'd spend the whole day in terror.	Incidences of psychological terrorism by schoolmates are remembered with intense clarity.	Physical and emotional abuse by peers. Fear, damage to self-esteem. Social Outcast/The Outsider.

32.	I developed a kind of rebellious attitude; like if you guys really don't like me, I'm going to make you <u>really</u> not like me by being really different.	Developed an attitude of rebelliousness in order to cope. "If I'm teased for being different, then I'll <u>really</u> be different!"	Reaction Formation. Adopts rebel role as defense mechanism. "The Different One."
33.	I was really extreme to be perfectly honest. In Grade 10 and 11 I would do things like wear giant bird feet and bird costumes to school, or I would dress up like a doctor. I had all these different costumes. I was taking risks, but they didn't send me home.	Took this attitude to extremes by wearing outlandish costumes to school. This was his way of taking risks and getting attention. (Ingenuity of the "under-dog"?)	Deliberately draws attention to self in order to gain peer acceptance. Coping mechanism. Class Clown/Comedian.
34.	I did it to draw attention to myself. I liked the attention. I'd rather have someone hate me for a reason than hate me without even knowing me.	Understand that this tactic was deliberate. Discovers he liked attention. Rationalizes that he'll give them a "<u>real</u>" reason to hate him.	Need for Attention. Search for Identity Rationalization.
35.	Some of the cool, outspoken kids approved of me - We became rebels and close friends. I felt I had a place, even if I was weird.	Tactic "works." R. finds an identity as part of a peer group who were rebels.	Importance of peer acceptance.
36.	I'm very consciously aware constantly of how I come across to people, but much more now in the context of homosexuality. "Does this person know, is it written all over my face? I hope they don't think I'm effeminate." This is a part of homosexuality I've never bought into. I've never felt any desire to be a woman.	Constantly wonders whether other people can guess about his homosexuality. Wonders if he "looks the part." Disapproves of outwardly feminine homosexuals. Asserts that he has never had any desire to <u>be</u> a woman.	Self-consciousness. Hiding the secret self-(gay side). Rejection of effeminate guy stereotype.

37.	I've thought about how being a homosexual is against the norm. If I was totally heterosexual, however, I would still be against the norm. Like there is a part of me that has to be against the norm.	Being a homosexual means going against the norm. Yet he feels regardless of his sexual orientation, he would still choose to go against the norm.	Rebel identity. Homosexuality as rebellion. The Outsider.
38.	When I was growing up, homosexuality was for me so taboo,so awful - not religiously wrong or anything, but just hateful. "People should hate homosexuals," you know. In our school it was the worst insult to call someone a fag. I got called it a lot.	Homosexuality is seen as a hateful societal taboo -- the worst insult one could receive at school. R. remembers being called "a fag" frequently.	Homosexuality as a cultural taboo. Labelling by others. Shaming by Peers. Pain of Coming Out to Oneself/to Others.
39.	I don't think I'd call myself a homosexual just in order to be different. I wouldn't have willingly bought into this much abuse just to be different. I'd rather wear bird feet than be called a homosexual if I'm going to have abuse from people.	Senses he would not have adopted a homosexual label just to express his individuality. The price is too high in terms of abuse and social condemnation. Wearing costumes to school was a better way to be viewed as "different" than admitting to homosexual impulses.	The price of assuming gay identity is high. Hiding his "true" identity through altering his persona. Fusion of Inner and Outer Identity as Different.
40.	In Grade 10, I went to drama school in the summer. I loved drama. I liked the attention. There were lots of other bizarre people there too, and suddenly I wasn't the only one with bird feet. I finally felt "okay."	Again, receives inclusion and confirmation as an individual in a drama group. Other people are also "different" - therefore he finally felt "Okay."	Need for attention and validation from others. Need to belong to a group. Beginning of Self-Acceptance.

41.	I also fell in love. It was my first love. Her name was Lisa. I was completely smitten by her. She was very religious and really beautiful. I was in love and she reciprocated.	Earliest love relationship with a girl. She was religious and beautiful and he was "completely smitten." Love was reciprocal, but non-sexual.	Ecstasy of first love with a girl. Idealized Woman.
42.	She ditched me right away. I only knew her for a week. For three years after I was obsessed with her even though she never spoke to me again after that.	First love leaves him after one week. He remained "obsessed" with her in spite of never seeing her again.	Rejection by Idealized Woman. Lost love. Obsession.
43.	I used to fantasize about her. I'd almost use it as an excuse to get out of having relationships with girls.	Recalls fantasizing about her and implies it may have been a means of avoiding other relationships with girls.	Avoidance of actual female intimacy through fantasies of idealized woman.
44.	I was 18 when I had my first sexual relationship with a girl. I was brought up that premarital sex was bad. I held to that very strongly.	At age 18, he has first sexual relationship with a girl. Remembers thinking that premarital sex was "bad."	Guilt. Sex as taboo. Sexual awakening.
45.	All through my teens, I was masturbating, and the majority of my fantasies were male fantasies. Then I'd get fed up with myself and I would turn to female fantasies. I'd force myself to only fantasize about women for weeks at a time and then I'd think "Come on Richard, it doesn't hurt just to think about it."	Teenage masturbation fantasies revolved around males. Guilt forces him to deliberately try to fantasize only about women, "for weeks at a time," but the male fantasies returned. Rationalizes that it "doesn't hurt just to think about it."	Male sexual fantasies. Sexual guilt over the "incorrect" fantasy. Conscious struggle to alter sexual fantasies. Homosexual identity ambivalence.

46.	My first homosexual encounter was when I was in my first year at university, when I was 19. He was a friendly guy and we'd hang out together a lot. Slowly in the course of time I came to see him as being very attractive.	First homosexual encounter occurs at age 19. R. "slowly" comes to see this male friend as "very attractive."	Homosexual awakening.
47.	I told him I was attracted to him, but then I felt really stupid for saying it.	After admitting his attraction to him, R. feels "stupid" for admitting it. Shame of "coming out."	Id vs. Superego. Intrapsychic Conflict. Shame/Ambivalence Coming Out to Other.
48.	Then I would walk the streets at night when I was upset about something. I met a homosexual, went back to his place and I just asked a lot of questions about what it was like to be a homosexual. I tried to understand homosexuality. I found it all rather disturbing. The third time I went over, I was kind of seduced.	Went for solitary walks to try to deal with his confusing impulses. Met another homosexual from whom he tried to gain knowledge and understanding. Found homosexuality very disturbing. Eventual seduction.	Confusion. Isolation. Fear. Need to understand. Intrapsychic Conflict.
49.	It was very awkward for me. I looked at it as just a kind of experimentation thing. Afterward's I thought to myself "Well, I guess I'm not homosexual, because that was pretty stupid. Not too great." I was disappointed. I thought "Is that all there is to it?"	This experience was "very awkward." Relief at the thought he wasn't truly homosexual because he didn't enjoy it. Remembers feeling disappointed, that there wasn't much to it after all.	"Yo-Yo" Syndrome. Relief. Possibility that homosexual impulses are fictitious. Disappointment in earliest homosexual experiences.

50.	I walked away from that and said literally to myself "Well, that's out of my system!"	One unsatisfactory homosexual experience is seen as proof he's "normal" - now it was over and done with. Relief.	Relief at confirmation of "normality."
51.	At that time I was still having sex with my girlfriend Karen. We had a really good relationship.	Concurrently he is having sex with his girlfriend. Emphasizes that this was a "really good relationship."	Keeping options open. Bisexual activity.
52.	The second guy I slept with was much more physically attractive - tanned and muscular looking - more masculine. But he just walked out on me right afterwards.	Second experience was more satisfactory due to the physical attractiveness of the male partner.	Worship of idealized masculinity. Fixation on physical attributes.
53.	After that I felt ashamed. Really dirty ... like there was this whole part of me that needed to be taken off and laundered - that kind of thing.	Starts to feel ashamed, "really dirty". Anxiety and disgust over the now emerging homosexual side of him. Wishes to wash it clean.	Shame. Self-disgust. Homosexuality as ego-alien.
54.	It seemed filthy and despicable. I came to despise it almost. Sex with Karen made so much more sense. Everything seems to fit very well together with a male and female.	Homosexuality is seen as "filthy and despicable." Contrasts this with heterosexual sex which seems normal, sensible, and ordained by natural law.	Homosexuality as repulsive. Heterosexuality as "normal." Homosexuality as "abnormal."
55.	It's more natural. (Heterosexuality) Homosexuality - the anatomy doesn't match up properly. It was so awkward, so strange. It was sex, just sex.	Heterosexuality = natural law. Homosexuality = unnatural, awkward, yet pure "sex."	Homosexuality as abnormal, awkward. Homosexual drive as "pure sex."
56.	Then again afterward, I remember going "Wow! that was a <u>real</u> man this time, and I <u>still</u> don't think this is for me! Phew! Thank God!"	Immense relief at the thought he isn't an homosexual after all.	Relief at self-perceived "normality." Rationalization. "Yo-Yo" Syndrome.

57.	But then I didn't really believe myself. All through this I didn't believe myself. I would talk to Karen about my feelings for other men and how I fantasized about other men. Karen thought this was great. That we could have a threesome. She's a real wild gal.	Inner voice doubts this as true. He got no help from his girlfriend who was liberated and thought homosexual sex was "great." Anything goes attitude.	"Yo-Yo" Syndrome. Inner voice speaks "the truth" after all. Gains acceptance of homosexual impulses from a women.
58.	I didn't want her to think of me as homosexual. That I wouldn't be man enough for her.	If his girlfriend identifies him as homosexual, his masculine identity feels threatened.	Importance of Masculine Identity. Rejection of Homosexual Identify.
59.	We were very good friends, Karen and I. I loved her so much. I really loved her. This wasn't just a flash in the pan. I knew her inside out and she knew the whole of me so well too.	Is aware of his genuine love for his girlfriend. Seems like an ideal relationship that could last. Physical, emotional and spiritual intimacy.	Genuinely loves women. Ostensible Bisexuality. Female Friendship.
60.	Sexually, it was fun with her. She was wild and uninhibited. I find women erotic, but what I find sexually attractive about women is <u>very different</u> (emphasis) from the things I find sexually attractive about men.	Sex with his girlfriend was very satisfying. Realizes he finds men and women sexually attractive in very different ways. (States he finds women erotic.)	Capacity for sexual attraction to both sexes. Female vs. Male Attractiveness. Bisexual Capacity.
61.	In university I can remember a guy sitting in front of me - I could just see the side of his face and he had a very strong jawline that I used to look at and find very erotic. I was very turned on by that.	Remembers being erotically attracted by a male's strong jawline. Found this very exciting. (Intimations of the Marlboro Man again?)	Subtle aspects of male erotic attraction. "The Marlboro Man" phenomenon.

62.	And yet, a girl in shorts, just the very top of her thigh when the tan line ends, and if it's white, I used to find that just extremely attractive and erotic.	Yet, finds subtle aspects of females erotic too. States he "used to" find this very attractive and erotic." (Note: Past tense)	Subtle aspects of female erotic attraction.
63.	With Karen it was fun to be the strong, hard man. To be the muscular one and her very soft and gentle. She had a great physical shape. I can remember her being soft and gentle. She smelled nice and I really liked that.	Sex with Karen was very satisfying. He is aware of pleasure of being the "strong hard man." Contrast of male hardness and female softness.	Attraction to female softness. Assumes role of the "Strong hard man."
64.	... and yet the aspect of men that turned me on is the hard, aggressive, dominant, strong and sweaty - the aggressive side.	However, he also finds men's aggressivity strength, and sweaty dominance appealing.	Attraction to male aggression, dominance.
65.	Sometimes I think it's me playing different roles. In my mind's eye I would step outside of us, when making love, and look down on us. And I'd think "Wow, look at these guys doing it." It felt good to watch us like that.	Speculates that his enjoyment of both may be him assuming different roles. Is aware of the process of self-observation while making love and enjoys doing that.	Awareness of sexual role playing. Self-consciousness. Self-admiration. Bisexual Capacity. Search for Identity.
66.	I'm not sure if that's not even a homosexual thing. I can remember imagining myself in this male form.	Wonders if his enjoying "watching himself" as a male lover is a manifestation of homosexuality.	Idealized Male Focus on Physical Beauty.
67.	The most significant difference for me is that even though I'm aware of sexual attraction for women too, it's not as intense as it is for men.	Awareness that his attraction for men is more intense than his attraction for women.	Sexual attraction is stronger for men. Bisexual Capacity.

68.	There's something about having sex with a woman that's mildly distasteful. Like with guys it's awkward, but with girls it's kind of messy. Am I getting too personal here?	Sex with males might be awkward, but with women it's messy." He finds women "mildly distasteful" sexually.	Mild repulsion towards female sexuality.
69.	I do think I have a kind of tainted outlook on women. I do have a feeling that I'm being manipulated ... sometimes I look on women as a whole as being somewhat conniving, but just somewhat ...	Admits to a "tainted" outlook on women. Feels women can manipulate him and are in general "somewhat conniving."	Fear of Woman's Power Women as Manipulators.
70.	Historically, men have been physically so strong and dominant and "put women in their place" and women have naturally developed a quieter power ... then behind men's backs developing their own plans and plots.	Women, due to their inferior physical power, have had to learn to develop other kinds of subtler powers. Women as powerful manipulators.	Women's "quiet power" is potentially dangerous. Male versus Female Strength.
71.	A lot of this comes from my mother. She was always very concerned about what the women would do to me - that they would lead me down the garden path.	Recognizes this outlook comes from his mother. She taught him to be wary of women's power over men.	Controlling Mother Fear of Women's Power.
72.	Karen was a major major problem with my mother. She was very often saying "Karen's manipulating you to do this, she's making you do that! Can't you think for yourself?" So I learned to be on guard in the relationship quite a bit of the time. I became very untrusting.	Learned to not trust women from his mother. She gave him the message his girlfriends were taking over his autonomy.	Mother teaches fear of females. Females as untrustworthy. Identification with Mother.

73.	She'd imply that women just want to grab hold of a good guy like you, marry you, trap you into their lives and make you have all their babies etc.	Mom says "Women only want to trap and marry a good guy like you." i.e. Women are dangerous and will force fatherhood onto you etc.	Mother as Covetor of Son. Message: Women are traps. Fear of Female Power.
74.	I've always felt a useful analogy for me is that women are more like cats. They're sort of affectionate and warm, but come to you and cuddle you when <u>they</u> want to. When they've had enough, they leave.	Perceives women to be like cats - only affectionate when it is on <u>their</u> terms. Not loyal all the time.	Females as "feline" Misogynistic Overtones. Female as not loyal. Male versus Female.
75.	Men are exactly the opposite. I identify men with dogs. They're generally loyal and kind of floppy and friendly ...what you see is what you get. They might be brash and strong and slobber a lot, but you can take them for face value.	Men are perceived to be similar to dogs - "loyal, floppy and friendly." You can take them to be as they appear to be.	Men as trustworthy and loyal. Male/Female as Opposites.
76.	Whereas with cats, you're never quite sure what's going on behind those eyes. And I've never liked cats.	Cats (i.e. women) are devious, untrustworthy. He's "never liked cats."	Misogynistic overtones. Females as devious felines. Untrustworthy.
77.	I always would much rather have a loyal dog by my side to stand by me and stay with me and everything's out on the table.	Again, restates idea men are like loyal dogs who have no devious qualities.	Men as dependable "canines." Males as Trustworthy.
78.	Sam is like a loyal dog. Very trustworthy. Extremely trustworthy. Sam's probably one of the only individuals that I can really trust 110 percent.	Likens his live-in partner to a loyal dog who is trustworthy. He's the only individual R. trust fully.	Partner's loyalty is dependable, safe. Males = "safe."

79.	Karen had some doglike qualities. Even though she was a woman and kind of furry, I knew she loved me very much. I would use that to make sure she was loyal --- even though she was kind of kitten and catty, I wanted her to know who held the leash.	Girlfriend was a mixture of a cat and a dog. She was a woman, yet loved him very much. He needed to assert his dominance and power over her.	Need to establish male dominance over women.
80.	... because I wanted her to give me a sense that she really needed me and wanted to be with me and was going to stay with me.	He tested her loyalty in order to feel she would not abandon him. He wanted her to need him.	Tests girlfriend's loyalty.
81.	I wanted to show her who's conniving who ... who's got the <u>real</u> power, the real control. I don't know. I hurt her very badly, and to this day I feel sad about that ... I don't get a kick out of hurting people.	Describes his need to let her know she'll never "get the upper hand" on him. He feels regret and remorse for hurting her badly.	Urge to "Control Women Shame, remorse. Fear of Female Power.
82.	My mother - well, I suppose everyone has a saint-like vision of their mother, but I mean she <u>really</u> is a totally cool dame. She's always very zestily full of life and a very spiritual person. She was always very loving and nurturing.	Mother is viewed as a saint. An image of the idealized woman. Loving, nurturing, and full of life - very spiritual.	Mother as Saint. Idealized woman.
83.	She's a large woman, about six one, rather overweight. She's cultured, loves music and opera and appreciates the finer things in life.	Mother is physically imposing - Is cultured and appreciates the goods things in life.	Appreciation of Mother.

84.	She doesn't deserve the shitty things that happened to her. It <u>really</u> upsets me that this happened to her. She gives so much to people.	Life hasn't been fair to his mother. He feels upon on her behalf. Identification with Mother's pain.	Identification with Mother's Pain.
85.	Since I've told her about Sam and I and homosexuality it's been awkward. She's very accepting, but I got used to wearing a mask - with being this altogether straight guy, showing Mom that "Hey, if everybody else in the family is fucked up, <u>I'm</u> okay." It sounds egocentric, but it was true.	Revealing his homosexuality to his mother was "awkward." He had to abandon his role as the ideal model son in his mother's eyes. Revelation of "true" self is painful. False self was more acceptable.	False self is sacrificed for true self. Need to please Mother. Family Role = The "Normal" One.
86.	But then that was such a sacrifice, you know, to find out I was gay.	Declaring his homosexuality publicly, revealing "the secret" is seen as a sacrifice.	Coming out involves sacrifice.
87.	Before, I could joke and laugh with her, but now I feel that if I'm too silly, am I going to be acting gay, or am I acting homosexual?	If he lets his sense of humour out now, he worries he will be perceived as "acting homosexual" in the eyes of others.	Adoption of inner homosexual identity invokes fear of being <u>identified</u> as a homosexual. Rejection of Homosexual Stereotype.
88.	I'm coming across more serious now because I'm very aware that she knows I'm homosexual ... Other than this gay thing, I was the apple of my mother's eye. I could do no wrong.	Senses he is now more constricted around his mother. The "apple of her eye" has now been tainted.	Homosexual identity invokes self-consciousness. Relinquishment of False Roles.

89.	All through growing up, I was my mother's caretaker. She even talks about it with me now in saying that she thinks she emotionally incested me. She relied on me a little too heavily at points.	Awareness of his family role as mother's caretaker. Mother admits to possible emotional incesting of her son.	Emotional incest. Surrogate Spouse to Mother.
90.	I think my mother looked at the homosexuality as being a product of her emotional incest with me. I think she feels responsible.	Mother feels son's homosexuality is "her fault" - a product of her excessive dependence on him.	Maternal guilt.
91.	I'm aware that Sam fills an awful lot of needs that are probably related to a dad role model. Some things are superficial, like Sam is an extremely well kept man and very manicured, very neat.	Partner now fills needs that are associated with role model of a father. Partner is neat and well groomed.	Male bonding. Gay Partner as Father Substitute. Repression of Erotic Attachment to Father.
92.	He's taught me an awful lot about just what it is to be a man, being male, you know. All those men toiletry kind of things. That's been an education for me.	Partner has taught him (as his father couldn't) what it is to be a man. He has in some ways been educated by his male partner.	Partner as Mentor.
93.	He's also very sociable and friendly. He isn't shy. Sam is like my dad used to be. People used to describe dad as very charming, very polite. Sam is that way.	Partner is similar to the way his own dad used to be - charming, polite, socially acceptable.	Partner replaces Lost Father. Reclaiming Lost Father.
94.	In intimate relations with Sam it's nice to be held by Sam, to hug; we hug a lot. It's nice; it's comfortable.	Intimacy with partner is described as nice, comfortable. Physical contact with him is pleasurable and reassuring.	Urge for male intimacy. Reassurance.

95.	I like having a hard body there, like somebody strong and to some degree protective. It's nice to feel protected but at the same time it's nice to be in the role of protector.	Enjoys the sense that his partner's body is strong and protective. R. enjoys playing both roles - the protector and the protected. Broader role versatility.	Masculinity as Protective. Role Versatility.
96.	With Karen, I was her protector, but with Sam it's kind of nice to feel protected by him.	With women, his roles are more restricted. He "must" be the protector.	Role restriction with Females.
97.	I think I'm almost through the process of establishing a gay identity. It's really complicated. It was really complicated and it didn't need to be. That kind of pisses me off actually.	Speculates that the process of gay identity acquisition is almost complete. Feels anger that it was all more complicated and painful than it needed to be.	Complexity of gay identity acquisition. A process still in process. Anger.
98.	When I called the Gay and Lesbian Centre two years ago, I was too embarrassed to talk to anybody face to face.	Recognizes that he has moved quite far in this process over the last two years. Remembers earlier shame and embarrassment.	Shame. Recognition of progress with resolving the dilemma.
99.	I told one fellow over the phone that I'd had heterosexual relationships too, and that's not something I necessarily wanted to give up.	Wish to maintain his options for both heterosexual and homosexual relationships.	Bisexual Option.

100.	He said "So you consider yourself a bisexual?" I guess so, yeah. I'm bisexual. Then he replies that "We here view that bisexuality is more of a fence sitting. It's a sort of transitionary phase between a heterosexual expectation and a homosexual lifestyle that you're going to follow."	Recalls being told that homosexuals consider bisexuality as a "transitionary phase" - not an authentic orientation.	The "myth" of bisexuality.
101.	So suddenly this guy had set it up for me instantly. "Okay, I <u>have</u> to be gay or I <u>have</u> to be straight."	Anxiety results from the sense of <u>having</u> to make a choice of one or the other. A choice he's not yet ready to make.	Either - Or Dilemma. Existential anxiety over renunciation of options. Choosing not to choose. Sexual Orientation as "choice."
102.	And humming and hawing and wow! And yourself saying "You know, it's okay Richard <u>not</u> to make a decision."	Calms himself by affirming his right <u>not</u> to make a decision at this point.	Sexual orientation is not black or white.
103.	After he told me that, I decided there was no way I could make a decision. I can't choose black or white here.	Cannot see the issue for himself in terms of black or white, either - or.	Keeping options open. Intraphyschic conflict. Sexual Orientation a continuum.
104.	So I coasted along. I dated another girl and I enjoyed a sexual relationship with both her and Sam. But I kept telling myself "Richard, you're fence-sitting. Someone's got to go."	Decides not to decide. Continues relationships with both sexes, yet inner voice, or conscience is urging him to choose one or the other.	Guilt. Id versus Superego. Bisexual Capacity. Necessity of Choice.

105.	It was wrong too in that I was being intimate with two people at once regardless of what the sex situation is. If you're heterosexual, you're not supposed to date two women at once either. It hurts to have to share a person.	Is aware of his guilt over intimacy with two different individuals at the same time. Feels pricks of his conscience over this. A wave of feelings of potential pain caused to others.	Guilt. Id versus Superego. Confusion.
106.	But it was a good balance for a while. Then I realized somebody had to go. It was just a process of elimination. I mean I really like Hilary, I love Sam, and in a lot of ways I love Hilary but not as much as Sam. So I ditched Hilary.	Deciding not to decide feels "good" for a while. Lowers anxiety, yet conscience keeps saying he has to give one up. Since he "liked Hilary" and "loved Sam," he voted for Sam.	"Like" versus "Love". Passion rules over Practicality.
107.	I've read a little bit more lately about homosexuality. A more Jungian approach, that sees it on a continuum.	Relates to the idea of seeing sexual orientation as a continuum - not in terms of black or white.	Sexual orientation as a continuum. Bisexual Option.
108.	I firmly believe it's just on a continuum. There are men I know that are gay that have never ever slept with a woman and could not even entertain the idea of sleeping with a woman. It's almost revolting to them. It's like what I imagine a heterosexual man thinks of homosexuality. "Yuck - yuck!"	Reaffirms conviction that s.o. is on a continuum. Knows some gay men who would never consider intimacy with a woman.	Refuge in Bisexuality. Rationalization.
109.	And then there's homosexual men that have slept with women and thought that it was okay but prefer it with men.	Other gay men have intimacy with women but prefer it with men. ("Good" versus "better").	Inner Dialogue. Search for Understanding.

110.	There are guys (my friend's husband) that sleep with women and prefer it with women, but go and do it with a guy once in a while too.	Others, are primarily heterosexual, yet enjoy an occasional encounter with a male.	Bisexual option.
111.	The idea of this continuum frightens me a bit too. I wonder is this some kind of denial again now? Am I fumbling for an answer? Am I trying to lie to myself and make it a little more comfortable? That "maybe I'm still okay. Maybe I'm truly straight. Maybe I'm still straight. Maybe it's a phase."	Starts to lose faith in the idea of a continuum. Wonders if it is a form of denial - A way for him to avoid assuming a fully gay identity? Wonders if he's into self-deception in order to feel more acceptable to himself.	"Yo-yo" syndrome. Self-doubt. Search for authentic self. Homosexuality as a Phase.
112.	Even a few nights ago, I was thinking about how much I really wanted kids. How much I want a family. Nice white house, shutters, and red door. How I want all these things.	Acute sense of loss involved in making either "choice." Awareness of grief over thinking he will never have his own children, wife, family structure - all things he dreams of having.	Grief over anticipated losses. Relinquishment of Options.
113.	I want a wife that I can come home to at night - the dinner all ready - the next night it might be fetching lacy lingerie greeting me at the door. I like all that stuff. It's just a part of me I really want to have too.	Fantasy of idealized woman and idealized family life. He longs for this too.	Seduction of "the Normal Life." Longing for "Normality."
114.	It sounds like I want my cake and eat it too.	Awareness of wanting to "have it all." (Pain of existential choice). Hopes to solve the dilemma by finding an "open-minded" woman who could accept and understand his need for homosexual contact too.	Pain of Renunciation.

115.	So I figure well, maybe some day I will meet a nice, extremely open-minded woman who might understand that Sam is a very good friend of mine, and from time to time I may need to be with him physically.	Awareness of wanting to "have it all." (Pain of existential choice). Hopes to solve the dilemma by finding an "open-minded" woman who could accept and understand his need for homosexual contact too.	Keeping options open. Idealized Woman who will accept all.
116.	I can say this is a fantasy, but there's a part of me that says if I want it badly enough, I can have both happen. But then I think "Oh come on now, you're just in denial. You're a happy kid thinking you can have it all."	Alternates between believing in his fantasy of having it all and can have "both happen." (Inner child) but then the adult side questions the likelihood of this. Inner dialogue struggling with possibilities that remain to be ascertained.	Hope versus despair. Yo-yo Syndrome. Fantasy versus Reality. Inner Dialogue.
117.	I only have problems when I have to think of having only one or the other. If I can think of it that I enjoy being with Sam right now, it's filling a lot of needs right now and who knows what the future will bring, then I'm just fine.	"Having to choose one or the other creates acute stress and anxiety. Solution is to choose Sam at this time, while keeping future options open. Then he feels calmer.	Pain of Renunciation. Keeping options open.
118.	I think about modern gays, about how they do things. Some days I'm sure Sam and I could have our own kids. You know, we could have a kind of homosexual family.	Now fantasizes about possibilities of a gay family where he and his partner can adopt children. Tries to keep all possibilities open.	Idealized homosexual partnership. Hope. "Yo-yo" Syndrome.
119.	But that still isn't as good as ... I talk about how much I want kids, but it's not just the kids I want. I want the family environment too. I want the husband, the wife and the 2.3 kids.	Acknowledges a gay family would not be as "good as" a heterosexual one. He "wants it all."	"Yo-yo" Syndrome. Confusion. Doubt.

120.	Actually, in the past month and a half I've really fought a strong desire to get laid by a woman. I guess I still need to keep my options open.	Still feels sexual urges towards women. Needs to feel he doesn't <u>have</u> to make a choice at this point.	Keeping options open. Female sexual fantasies.
121.	The trade-off then is I'm giving up some kind of sense of permanence that I think is comfortable too. When you get married you get a sense of this person who is going to stay with you until death. That is a symbol of marriage - that there's something constant that's going to be with you.	If he lives a homosexual lifestyle, he feels he would be renunciating a security that he fantasizes comes with marriage. Marriage = a constant factor; security until death.	Idealized heterosexual marriage as stability. Death anxiety. Longing for "Normality."
122.	I guess what it boils down to is, I'm happy living gay right now. But I'm also happy with the prospects for other things. What those other things are, I'm not sure yet.	I guess what it boils down to is, I'm happy living gay right now. But I'm also happy with the prospects for other things. What those other things are, I'm not sure yet.	Keeping options open. Choosing gay now.
123.	I haven't burnt my bridges.	He hasn't fully "decided" yet.	Keeping options open.
124.	It does bother me, but I don't see why what I like has to be so strange. I don't see why certain things that have happened to me aren't okay. I don't know why there has to be such an issue. Why can't we <u>all</u> do this?	Wonders why this "crisis" has seemed so difficult and "strange." Why isn't it "OK" to be ambivalent? Why can't we all explore these various possibilities with less pain and judgment?	Sexual orientation crisis is overly complicated. Resentment. Internal Dialogue. Need for Understanding.

125.	I'm perfectly willing to be open. I'm perfectly willing to meet a nice girl who's warm, witty, fun, and loyal. Much like Karen. I actually regret losing that relationship a great deal. I lost her in a big way. It was ugly.	He wants to remain flexible. Still dreams of the perfect girl who will be his eventual partner. Regrets the loss deeply of an earlier love with a woman.	"Yo-Yo" Syndrome. Ideal woman as Rescuer. Loss of Fantasized Ideal Woman.
126.	I'd like to find a girl that I could really be happy with and settle down with and you could spiritually grow together. Not like two halves make a whole, but two whole people coming together.	Ideal woman fantasy is still very important to maintain for him.	Hope. Idealized Woman.
127.	We could make a rewarding life for ourselves .... If she wanted to have relations with another woman I'd understand and respect that she has needs for something that I can't give her just because of what I am.	Imagines the "ideal life" - where he and she can both have homosexual encounters if they wish. Acknowledges homosexual needs in him will likely continue to exist.	Ideal Woman as Rescuer. Bisexual Option.
128.	I guess I'm willing to tolerate what I need. If I could find this woman that Sam would accept .... It would be quite a loss to have to cut back in any way.	If only he didn't have to relinquish options. If only he really could "have it all." The thought of having to choose brings him anxiety and anticipatory acute loss reaction.	Bisexual Option. Pain of Renunciation.
129.	I'm not sure I could have that kind of relationship with Sam now, after what we've built up. It would definitely be a rocky transition to that.	Doubts the practical reality of his fantasy. Realizes he might be expecting too much of himself and others.	Doubt about Bisexual Option. Fear.

130.	When I first met Sam I was always saying "Let's get married" sort of thing. I wanted to bind him to me. I want to have the sense that he's going to be there. I don't want him to leave me.	Anxiety of possible loss of his gay lover is frightening. He wishes to permanently "bind" him to the relationship (i.e. imagines marriage) in order for the other not to abandon him.	Introjection of Love Object. Fear of abandonment. Need for Male Intimacy.
131.	So am I gay because of all these awful things that happened in my life? How come all these awful things happen to other people and that doesn't make <u>them</u> gay?	Speculates that his childhood wounds may have "caused" his homosexuality, yet doubts the validity of this belief.	Search for an environmental "cause." Search for Understanding.
132.	If I could flick a magic wand between gay and straight, I would still choose straight. I would rather be straight. If I could feel this intensity about women that I feel about Sam, I would choose that.	Given the ultimate "choice," he would choose to be heterosexual if he could. However, he senses it is not a matter of "choice." His "intensity" for men is stronger than it is for women.	Awareness that homosexuality is not a "choice." Males = Passion. Longing for "Normality."

Table 2

Thematic Clusters of Richard's Experience

1. Identity Confusion / Ambivalence
   (45, 47, 48, 50, 97, 100, 108, 112, 116, 125, 132, 133)
2. Bisexual Option
   (51, 59, 60, 63, 67, 99, 100, 102, 107, 108, 109, 110, 115, 116, 120, 122)
3. Existential Necessity of Choice
   (1, 86, 101, 104, 106, 112, 114, 117, 129, 133)
4. "Yo-Yo" Syndrome
   (49, 56, 57, 111, 112, 113, 116, 118, 119, 126)
5. Identification with Mother
   (4, 7, 9, 10, 71, 82, 84, 88, 89, 90)
6. Early Homoerotic Attraction
   (25, 26, 27, 28, 45, 46, 52, 57, 64, 65, 66, 75, 77, 78, 91)
7. Worship of Idealized Masculinity
   (25, 26, 27, 52, 61, 92, 95)
8. Rejection of Homosexuality as Ego Alien
   (36, 38, 39, 53, 54, 55, 57, 58)
9. Misogyny / Fear of Women
   (68, 69, 72, 73, 74, 76, 79, 80, 81)
10. Fantasy of Idealized Woman
    (41, 42, 43, 121, 126, 127, 128)
11. Male Sexual Fantasies
    (27, 28, 45, 57, 64, 65, 66)

12. Female Sexual Fantasies
    (43, 45, 62, 63, 67, 120)
13. Homosexual Awakening
    (25, 26, 27, 28, 46, 49)
14. Rationalization
    (18, 20, 34, 45, 49, 56, 108, 117)
15. Lost Father
    (5, 6, 12, 15, 16, 21, 23, 93)
16. Defensive Distancing from Father
    (13, 14, 15, 18, 23, 24)
17. Need for Attention
    (33, 34, 36, 40)
18. Shame / Secrecy
    (13, 36, 38, 47, 53, 98)
19. Need for Male Intimacy
    (91, 94, 95, 131)
20. Surrogate Spouse to Mother
    (10, 89, 90)
21. The Outsider
    (8, 31, 37)
22. False Self vs. Authentic Self
    (85, 87, 88, 111)
23. Idealized Early Childhood
    (2, 3, 19)
24. Mother as Vulnerable
    (4, 7, 9, 84)
25. Reaction Formation
    (11, 17, 32, 33, 34)

26. Sexual Precocity(29)

Overall Synthesis of Richard's Experience

Richard's earliest memories are of a safe, almost idyllic childhood which ended abruptly at age eight when his family moved from New York to Edmonton. His early memories of his father were of a fairly friendly man who, although he would occasionally play with his two small sons, was described as "weird" and physically awkward according to Richard. It was at this time that his father was first diagnosed as a paranoid schizophrenic and Richard's pain and confusion regarding his increasingly distant, bizarre, and unavailable father began to escalate. Richard described his childhood as ending at this time, with he assuming the role of supporter and surrogate spouse to his mother (10,89,90).

In order to cope with the shame and confusion surrounding his father's illness, Richard's solution is to emotionally divorce himself from his father - to literally learn to think of him as dead (14). He realizes that this defensive distancing from his father was what he had to do as a child in order to cope, yet is aware of a profound sense of loss and unresolved grief over this issue (13,14,18,24). Later in the interview he reflects that his deep attachment and fondness for his current male partner is probably strongly related to his need to reclaim his "lost Father" - a man he describes as reminding him of his earlier memories of his father, sociable and friendly, "like my Dad used to be" (91,93). At the time of the interview, Richard had not heard from his father for over two years, and was convinced he was

most likely dead (21).

The result of this early loss set the stage for much of Richard's later development in several ways, most notably in his tendency to identify with his mother, another major theme in his protocol (4,7,9,10,71,82,84,88,89,90). The identification with his mother's pain became the genesis for his developing the role of her "surrogate spouse," a role about which he expresses considerable ambivalence (9, 10). Later in the interview, he talks about how his mother fears that she emotionally incested him (89), and wonders if she is therefore "responsible" for his homosexuality (90). Richard appears to feel deeply ambivalent towards his mother, seeing her on one hand as vulnerable and overly-emotional (4,7,9,84), yet at the same time as strong, capable, reliable, cultured and even saintlike (22,82,83).

Another way in which Richard's identification with his mother is revealed is in his outlook towards women, which he describes as "tainted" (69). He talks about how his mother expressed disapproval for most of his girlfriends by frequently warning him of the dangers of being "manipulated" by devious and controlling women who would "lead him down the garden path" (71) and who "just want to grab hold of a good guy like you, trap you into their lives and make you have all their babies etc." (73). He likens females to cats whom he has "never liked" (76) - essentially devious, self-serving, unpredictable and untrustworthy (74), while males he likens to dogs - uncomplicated, loyal, honest and trustworthy (75,77,78). He attributes this distrust towards women to his

mother's earlier influence upon his feelings about girls (71), and recognizes that his critical appraisal of former girlfriends is influenced by his need to please his mother by staying true to his role as surrogate spouse.

Richard also expresses concern about revealing his homosexual side to his mother. He states that in front of his mother, "I got used to wearing a mask - with being this altogether straight guy, showing Mom that 'Hey, if everyone else in this family is fucked up, at least I'm okay,'" again reiterating the idea that it is very important to Richard to fulfill a certain role for his mother (85). After finally sharing his secret regarding his homosexual impulses with her, in spite of her ostensible acceptance, he worries that if he were to act silly or comically with her, she might interpret his behaviour as "acting gay or acting homosexual" (87). His family status as the favorite son might thus be compromised, so he now deliberately tries to act in a more serious manner because "other than this gay thing, I was the apple of my mother's eye. I could do no wrong." (88) In effect, therefore, revealing his homosexual side has the paradoxical effect of necessitating the adoption of yet another false identity (serious adult) in order to feel accepted by his mother.

Richard recalls as a child and teenager "thinking of myself as extremely unattractive" (30). He experienced quite severe physical end emotional abuse by his peers that threatened his self esteem and left him feeling socially isolated (30,31). In response to the torment, he developed

an attitude of rebelliousness, a type of "class clown role" that manifested itself in attention-seeking behaviors such as wearing outlandish costumes to school in order to deliberately draw attention to himself (32,33,34). As he states: "I did it to draw attention to myself. I liked the attention. I'd rather have someone hate me for a reason than hate me without even knowing me." (34) This was an adaptive strategy which won him some close friends and sufficient peer approval to make school life more tolerable and also developed into a subsequent interest in drama and the arts, despite the underlying emotional pain.

Another cental theme in Richard's protocol relates to early signs of homoerotic attraction. He recalls at age seven being strongly attracted to a "Marlboro Man" ad in a magazine. At the time, he was of course unaware that the attraction was sexual, but viewed it as a healthy admiration for an ideal male role model (25,26,27), and kept the picture hidden in his desk drawer for several years. Later, at age eleven or twelve, he remembers fantasizing about this picture while masturbating (28), and throughout the interview mentioned instances of male sexual fantasies (27,28,45,57,64,65,66) as well as generally feeling attracted towards males (46,52,57,64,75,77,78,91). These memories seem imbued with a certain element of secrecy, confusion, subtle erotic sensations, and a moving towards emotional and physical intimacy with males that could be interpreted as examples of prehomosexual awakening.

However, in his late teens Richard becomes attracted to

girls, and has the first of several heterosexual experiences at age eighteen. His first experience of "falling in love" was with a girl with whom he was "completely smitten" (41). Even though this relationship was not sexual and she "ditched" him quickly, he fantasized about her ("for three years"), and admits that the obsession he felt about her might have been "an excuse to get out of having relationships with girls" (43). In spite of trying to deliberately "force" himself to fantasize sexually only about females, the male fantasies always returned. In his own mind he would then rationalize homosexual fantasies by telling himself "it doesn't hurt just to think about it." (45)

Richard states: "I find women erotic, but what I find sexually attractive about women is very different from what I find sexually attractive about men." (60) He appreciates women's soft and gentle femininity, and enjoys being "the strong, hard man" (63) sexually with his girlfriend, yet is also erotically responsive to "the hard aggressive, dominant, strong and sweaty" aspects of males.(64) He seems to have the capacity for erotic attraction to both sexes, although he is aware that his attraction to women is "not as intense as it is for men." (67) It seems that his homosexual feelings are more passionate than his heterosexual ones, both physically and emotionally.

His account regarding sexual attraction at times seems contradictory and confused. After stating he is attracted to his girlfriend's softness and "nice smell" (63), and that he found sex with her to be "fun, wild and uninhibited" (60), he

then states that "there is something about having sex with a woman that is mildly distasteful...kind of messy" (68), that his outlook on women is "tainted," while sex with men is "awkward, strange," yet more sexually arousing (55). Some of this ambivalence towards sex could be a manifestation of his superego evoking guilt over childhood conditioning that "premarital sex was bad" (44), and a general association of sexuality with guilt and taboos, particularly homosexual sex (38).

Intrapsychic conflict is revealed in Richard's deep ambivalence towards homosexuality and the homosexual lifestyle, an aspect of himself which he frequently appears to reject as ego-alien (36,38,39,53,54,55,57,58). He is concerned by the idea that others might label him as "obviously" gay, something he adamantly wishes to avoid. After his earliest homosexual encounters he says he felt "ashamed...really dirty...like there was this whole part of me that needed to be taken off and laundered." (53) He objectifies his homosexual side as something outside and alien to himself: "It seemed filthy and despicable. I came to despise it almost." (54) After a couple of homosexual encounters, he managed to convince himself that he had only been experimenting and felt great "relief" at the thought that probably he wasn't homosexual after all (56), yet on a deeper level doubted whether this was so.(57)

The core of Richard's dilemma seems to be a painful struggle for identity characterized by a pattern of contradictory thoughts, ambivalent emotions and conflicted

actions, all of which leave him in inner turmoil and sometimes despair. One moment he is sure he is homosexual, the next that he's heterosexual. I have called this pattern the "Yo-Yo" Syndrome and it appears frequently in his interview (49,56,57,111,112,113,116,118,119,126). For example, in one statement he affirms that "I am almost through the process of establishing a gay identity" (97) and yet shortly after talks about how he "hasn't burnt any bridges yet" (123). Richard believes if he could just find the "ideal woman," who could accept all of who he is, then he would not have to face the painful renunciation of his fantasy of having a wife and children (112,113,114,115,116,119,120,126,127,128,129).

It is because this renunciation is so difficult and the pressure to "make a choice" feels so strong, that Richard takes refuge in the bisexual option in terms of trying to ascertain his own sexual orientation. By engaging in sexual relationships with both males and females, sometimes concurrently, Richard can "decide not to decide," thereby relieving the pressure of feeling he "must make a choice." (101,102) He alternates between "firmly believing" that sexual orientation lies somewhere on a continuum (107,108), and that bisexuality is a legitimate orientation, and between wondering if bisexuality is a form of "fence-sitting" (104) - a manifestation of homosexual denial (111). From one statement to the next, his mind struggles to come to some kind of understanding. One moment the idea of a continuum reassures him, the next it frightens him: "I wonder is this

some kind of denial again now? Am I fumbling for an answer? Am I trying to lie to myself and make it a little more comfortable? That 'maybe I'm still okay. Maybe I'm truly straight. Maybe I'm still straight. Maybe it's a phase.'" (111)

Richard's opening interview statement is an important one. For him, the question of sexual orientation involves having to make difficult choices regarding his identity and lifesyle (gay or straight), and is construed as a choice that of necessity involves painful renunciation of other hopes and dreams, such as marriage and a family. This existential theme of the inevitability of having to choose one or the other appears in numerous excerpts in the interview (1,86,101,104,106,112,114,117,129,133) and seems to be a major cause of the anxiety Richard experiences.

Towards the end of the interview, it becomes apparent that he has not reconciled these deep issues within himself. His only way to avoid the agony of having to choose is to continue keeping his options open, hoping that somehow he will still be able to "have it all" (116), thereby delaying the pain of renunciation. Richard's final statement epitomizes the painful dilemma of this "choiceless choice," for deep down he does not believe it is a matter of "choice" after all: "If I could flick a magic wand between gay and straight, I would still choose straight. I would rather be straight. If I could feel this intensity about women that I feel about Sam, I would choose that." (133)

Sean

Personal Information

Sean, age 29, is a middle son with an older and a younger brother, both of whom are now married with their own families. University educated, he works in the retail management field where he is considered successful. His father was a doctor, his mother a nurse who stayed home with the boys as they were growing up. When he was seven years old, his parents divorced. He had never before seen a therapist regarding sexual orientation issues prior to seeing me. Sean was currently involved in a monogamous homosexual relationship of eight months duration, prior to which he had experienced a number of both homosexual and heterosexual relationships.

Table 3

First Order - Thematic Abstraction of Sean's Experience.

	Excerpts from Protocols	Paraphrases	Themes
1.	Throughout high school, I was struggling quite a bit with this issue (homosexual urges). I was dating girls at the time, in fact I had a lot of fun. But I always felt there was something not quite right.	Struggled with homosexual urges during high school. Enjoyed dating girls, but sense "something wasn't quite right."	Premonition, foreboding. Awareness of Homosexual Urges.
2.	At about 20, I had my first gay encounter. I was working with a fellow and felt kind of attracted to him, but I never knew why or what was really going on.	First homosexual encounter was at age 20. Remembers feelings of being attracted to a male but was unsure of what these feelings meant.	Confusion. Uncertainty.
3.	One thing led to another, but afterwards I was really upset with myself and with him. Afterwards there was all this confusion. It was very upsetting for me.	After he acts on this impulse, he feels very upset with himself and his sexual partner. Confusion and anxiety results.	Shame. Emotional turmoil. Confusion, anxiety.
4.	I wished it had never happened. I didn't think this was really me. "I'm not like this," sort of thing.	Wishes to deny or eradicate this event. Felt it was an alien part of himself that committed the act.	Denial. Homosexuality as ego-alien.
5.	It was almost like an out of body experience. It wasn't me doing this. It was like a foreign part of me - a part of me that I'd maybe been trying not to let exist.	Dissociates while having the experience. Splits off the part of himself that commits the act - This part is foreign and alien - A part that has been suppressed.	Dissociation. Split-self. Suppresson of Homosexuality.
6.	I can remember at age 6 or so thinking a lot about my male friend, but not my female friends.	Earliest fantasies were about males (not overtly sexual fantasies, however).	Prehomosexual Awakening.
7.	I liked going to swimming pools as a kid - being with other men. I liked to hang out more with male friends then female. I thought about them when I went to bed at night.	Recalls enjoying being with men at a swimming pool as a child. Preferred men, and would think about them at night in bed.	Preference for Male company. Prehomosexual Awakening.

8.	I always tried to put it down to something normal.	Thought that fantasizing about men was normal.	Early Homoerotic Fantasies.
9.	When I had doubts about my sexuality, I always tried to hide it, especially from my mom. Even to this day, I doubt if I'll ever talk to my dad about it.	Tries to hide his sexual orientation, especially from his mother. He still has not ever discussed it with his father.	Sexual orientation Confusion. Shame/Secrecy.
10.	At age seven, my mom and dad divorced and I was sent to live with my grandmother in England.	Parents divorced and he was sent way to live with his grandmother in England.	Abandoned child. Dysfunctional family.
11.	Dad was having affairs. I don't know how my mom put up with it. I didn't know about it until I was 20 or 21. I knew he was hurting my mom, but I didn't know how or why. I didn't really understand it.	Father had affairs. Senses Mother is being very hurt, but child cannot comprehend what was happening to his family.	Family secrets. Unconscious knowing vs. Conscious confusion.
12.	I'd come home from school, her bags would be packed, and she'd be leaving. This would terrify me. I can always remember being upset with him for hurting her.	Terror over possible abandonment by mother. Feels anger toward his father for hurting his mother.	Abandonment terror. Anger towards Father. Identification with Mother's Emotional Pain.
13.	I don't talk to my dad at all now.	S. now has no contact whatsoever with his father.	Rejection of father. Lost Father.
14.	My older brother had all the responsibility of being the elder brother. I was in the middle - I just plodded along - I got lost in the shuffle, as if I wasn't really there.	Older brother was "the responsible one" in the family. He remembers being "lost" - the middle child who felt he was only partially present.	Family role as "the lost child."
15.	I did well at school, but mom just said "Oh, that's nice son." My younger brother had dyslexia so he got more attention from her.	Lost middle child who feels neglected and not as important as older and younger siblings.	Lost in the shuffle.
16.	As a child, I spent a lot of time by myself reading and watching T.V.	Lived a solitary lifestyle as a child.	Solitary lifestyle. The Outsider.

17.	I had a few friends, but they liked to spend a lot of time alone as well. I enjoy time alone. I really do. That's one reason why I now continue swimming. You can't talk to someone while you swim.	The few friends he had were also loners like him. He enjoys solitary activities still.	Isolation as comforting.
18.	Sometimes I come across as cold and distant to other people. I think I could try to seem a little warmer than I am.	Is aware that he strikes others as cold and remote. Would like to be "warmer" than he is.	Social persona as distanced, "cold." (False self vs. true self).
19.	I always question whether people really like me. I almost feel it's a defence - to be a little colder to people. That way if they don't like me I don't have to worry about being hurt by them.	Self-reflection makes him aware the coldness may be a defensive strategy against being judged and hurt by others.	Lack of self-esteem. Cold persona as defensive strategy.
20.	I need to have people prove that they like me and by doing so maybe I act cold just to see if they want to be friends with me.	People need to "prove" they like him in spite of his cold exterior. Uses this as a test.	Needs reassurance; seeks validation from others.
21.	I always thought Mom was Great. My dad was a doctor. The house always felt secure when I was a kid.	Memories of Mom as "great." Father was a medical doctor. Early memories of feeling secure as a child.	Idealization of Mother-figure. Early childhood = security.
22.	Then when my dad moved out I began to feel insecure. Mom tried to make us feel better that first Christmas after he left. My dad didn't show up.	Insecurity started when his father left his mother. Mother tries to fill emotional vacuum, but cannot.	Abandonment. Lost father. Heroine mother.
23.	I always felt sorry for my mom. I don't feel sorry for my dad. Mom always seemed to be hurt very easily.	Is aware and sensitive to Mother's pain. Feels sympathy for mother, none at all for father.	Mother as martyr. Mother as fragile. Rejection of father.
24.	My earliest memories of dad was that he was always around. We went fishing, he used to play with us, we'd wrestle. He was a lot of fun. I can remember enjoying spending time with him.	Early fonder memories of dad as a stable presence who was there to do the things fathers "do" - wrestle, play, go fishing, etc.	Idealization of earliest memories of Father. Physical Contact with Father.

25.	Then suddenly mom changed the locks on the doors, he was gone. I remember feeling really confused. Everything seemed to be very very dark.	Sudden shock of family disruption and dissolution. Total confusion, "blackness." Ideal family life is shattered.	Shock, confusion. Grief over lost family. Fear.
26.	My mom was so upset. I was mad at my brothers because they didn't seem to care. My brothers have never been tuned in to my mom at all.	Empathy for mother's plight. Anger towards brothers who seemed immune to the family's pain, particularly to mother's.	Empathy for Mother. Rage towards Father. Sibling rivalry. Men as insensitive, immune to female pain.
27.	I was the sensitive one. I would cry over long distance commercials. My brothers never showed any emotion. They seemed cold and uncaring, but maybe I was over-sensitive towards her.	Knows his family role as that of "the sensitive one." He was emotional (perhaps "overly" so) while brothers seemed too unemotional.	The sensitive one. Role ambivalence. Comparison to Heterosexual Brothers.
28.	I can remember being 9 years old, sitting on my mom's bed and she was crying. But I was very affected by what she was talking about, even though I didn't understand very well.	By age 9, he is in his role as "mom's comforter." In spite of not understanding <u>what</u> was happening, he responded sensitively to her emotional state.	Surrogate spouse. Mom's "hero." Mom's "friend."
29.	Ever since then, whenever she gets upset, she always comes and talks to me. Sometimes it gets too much.	This role continues to the present day. Sometimes the burden is "too much."	Mother's rescuer. Role ambivalence.
30.	Richard thinks she's too co-dependent on me - that she shouldn't call me up all the time. Often I've felt it's been too much. I'm not her counsellor. I tend to carry her problems around with me.	Partner's diagnosis = "co-dependence." Is aware there is some truth to this. Doesn't want to be mother's counsellor. Her burdens frequently feel too heavy for him.	Ambivalence towards burden of being surrogate spouse.
31.	I told her about Richard last year. I think she knew; she wasn't surprised in the least. She wasn't shocked.	Confessed his homosexuality to his mother quite recently. Secret is revealed, but he senses she had guessed the truth before.	Mother unconsciously knows about S's homosexual activities.
32.	When we lived for a while with my grandmother in England, my mom would telephone, but I don't think dad ever did.	Mom is there, dad isn't.	Nurturing mother. Abandoning father.

33.	He would visit us just for weekends. He does everything on weekends. I wish there could be more time with him. I didn't get to see him a lot. He was too busy.	Dad is a weekend dad only. Longs for more time with his father. Father was too busy to spend time with him.	Grief over lost father. Longing for father.
34.	When I see my father now, I don't feel like he's my dad any more. He's more like an uncle. I call him "Dad," but he's not my dad. "Dad" to me is a very foreign word.	Deals with the pain by getting an emotional divorce from his father. Father was too busy to spend time with him.	"Dad" as alien. Rejection of father as defensive strategy.
35.	When I <u>do</u> see him, there's not a lot to talk about. I wanted to talk to him privately last time he came out. I phoned him for lunch, but he showed up with his wife and sister-in-law. I was really upset about that.	Never any chance for real intimacy with his father - even to this day. The longing persists, and the emotional pain continues.	Longing for intimacy with father. Father's avoidance of intimacy with son.
36.	I've never ever been alone with my dad that I can remember.	Cannot recall a single time when he was ever alone with his father.	Profound grief. Longing for Father.
37.	The only reason I used to watch hockey was because it meant I could sit up with him and my older brother. It felt like it was the thing I was supposed to do. I hated hockey actually.	Adopts false self (hockey fan) in order to matter to his father and brothers. Will do anything to try to bond with his dad.	Adoption of false self as an attempt to be included into male brotherhood. Suppression of Homosexuality.
38.	Spending time with just you and your dad is something everyone is supposed to do. I spend so much time with my mom, but never any time with jut my dad.	Intense longing for quality time alone with his father. Mom is available, dad never has been.	Awareness of loss. Longing for Father.
39.	My grandfather, though was really wonderful. I can remember spending time with just him. We'd go for a walk and talk.	Grandfather partially assuaged the pain by filling some of this aching need for male intimacy.	Comfort of a male mentor.
40.	I feel sad every time I talk about my dad. I talk to other friends who have grown up with their fathers. Gone out to dinner with just their fathers, or sat and talked with just their fathers. I would have liked to do that.	Deep grief over the fathering he never had. Continues to be expressed - like an open wound of grief.	Ongoing grief over lost father.

41.	I cannot remember ever even touching my father.	Has no recollection of every physically touching his father.	Father as physically distant.
42.	I can remember my mom would touch me and it would just irritate me to no end. Even if she just touched my head,or just any sign of physical affection from her, it would really irritate me.	Mom's physical touch was extremely irritating to him. He wanted no physical affection from her. Recoils from mother's touch.	Aversion to female touch. Intimacy Dysfunction.
43.	Even with Richard sometimes I move away. It has nothing to do with him, but sometimes I just can't stand to be touched a lot.	Even nowadays with his male partner, he does not like a lot of physical contact.	Aversion to physical contact.
44.	I could be associating touch with my mom, who is very touchy, not wanting to be like that. My mom always seemed very vulnerable and upset about things. I was always comforting her an not wanting to be like her.	Mom is physically affectionate and Mom is being very vulnerable. Learns to associate affection with vulnerability which he despises in her.	Rejection of female vulnerability. Aversion to female touch. Surrogate spouse.
45.	Mom's vulnerable and she touches me. Dad's invulnerable and doesn't touch me. He always seemed very secure and safe. Never showed any emotion about anything. My mom, though, was an emotional basket case.	If I'm like my mom, I'll be an "emotional basket case." If I'm like my cold distant father, I can be invulnerable like him.	Males as secure. Females as vulnerable. Emotions as dangerous.
46.	I learned to survive by being okay with being alone. It meant I didn't have to deal with things. If I was alone it meant I didn't have to listen to someone's problems.	Solution was to become distant and solitary. Then pain can be effectively avoided.	Avoidance through isolation. The Outsider.
47.	I can remember in junior high wanting to spend a lot of time with one fellow because I thought he was good looking and seemed to be popular. He was very nice and pleasant. Has no recollection of ever physically touching his father.	Recalls attraction in junior high to a male schoolmate. Begins to be aware of his physical attraction towards males.	Stirrings of homosexual impulses.
48.	I changed school so much - Hong Kong, England, Toronto, Newfoundland, Edmonton. I began not to worry too much about making friends.	Early family experiences created the pattern of being a loner.	Social Isolation.

49.	In Grade 11 a female friend asked me to go with her and her parents to a gay nightclub. I remember having a lot of fun. Then I realized about homosexuality. It seemed very neat. Really Different.	Recalls this rather unusual scenario of being introduced to the gay world by his girlfriend's parents. Becomes consciously aware of the option of homosexuality which strikes him as exciting. ("It").	Homosexual awakening. Excitement. Cognitive assimilation of homosexual option. Objectification of Impulse ("It")
50.	Jane and her parents were accepting of it all. It didn't seem to bother them.	Girlfriend and her parents are accepting. This helps him feel more accepting too.	Need for approval. Reassurance.
51.	I saw all these guys together and I thought "Hey, this is cool." After that, I went often to the club with Jane. I can remember wanting to go, wanting to be around that atmosphere.	Urge to be in the environment where men were openly being romantic with other men. Senses himself being drawn towards that world.	Excitement. Homosexuality as enticing.
52.	At the same time I felt "This isn't me." It's neat here, but this isn't really me.	Concurrently, feels this is <u>not</u> who he is. "This may be exciting, but it is not who I am."	Identity confusion. Homosexuality as ego-alien. "Yo-Yo" Syndrome.
53.	I think of what is <u>really</u> me all the time, but I don't really know. I don't know.	Wants to establish a reliable, permanent identity. Knows he doesn't know.	Urge to know "true self." Identity Confusion.
54.	I wanted to be there with other male friends, but at the same time thinking that I can't let them know this. That I like them <u>too</u> much, or want to be <u>too</u> close to them.	The strong urge for intimacy with other males is counteracted by his need to keep his secret from them.	Shame. Secrecy. Approach-avoidance conflict. Ambivalence.
55.	I guess it was almost like a denial. I didn't want to admit that I was gay at all. If I was with Jane it would be all right.	Used his girlfriend as a "front" to avoid having to publicly state he might be gay. Being with girlfriend is a form of denial.	Denial. Secrecy. Private versus public self. Homosexuality as Ego Alien.
56.	I have had relationships with women. The first relationship I had was when I was 15. It was with a 21 year old woman that worked with my mom. She told my mom about wanting to date me.	Reflects on his relationship with women. First female sexual experience was at age 15 with an "older" woman who was his mother's friend.	Female as Pursuer.

57.	Mom didn't mind. She sanctioned it.	Mother sanctions this relationship.	Emotional incest?
58.	After my first sexual experience with her, I can remember feeling that this was sort of okay, but "is this all there is to it?" "There's got to be more than this."	Disappointment follows first sexual encounter. The reality does not measure up to the fantasy.	Disappointment. Fantasy/reality. Something missing.
59.	Then she began to irritate me. I always felt like my mom was the one setting things up for me.	Irritation develops as he feels he is being controlled by his mother in this relationship.	Controlling Mother. Need to please Mother. Irritation toward Females.
60.	I went along with it almost to make mom happy. Mom has always lined up my girlfriends. Sometimes I've been good friends with them simply because of my mom having liked them.	"Dates" mom's friend to please mom. "Dutiful son" will even sleep with Mom's friends to please her.	Emotional incest. Dutiful son. Need to please Mother.
61.	I remember I had one girlfriend that I really really liked. I enjoyed her in every way, sexually too. But my mom didn't think she was too great. That's maybe why I liked her more. Then she moved away.	The one girlfriend he "really liked" was the one Mom rejected. Attempts at claiming his rights to independence from his mother caused anxiety.	Controlling Mother. Hidden resentment. Rebellion against female smothering. Forbidden sex as Satisfying. Bisexual Capacity.
62.	I had a few other girlfriends, but whenever they would try to get too close, it would begin to irritate me. Don't smother me! Like my mom.	Experiences irritation when females get too close. Sensation of being "smothered." Awareness of this connection to his mother.	Mothering = "S - mothering." Irritation toward Female.
63.	I couldn't handle the clinginess, because my mom was like that. Even Richard tends to be clingy sometimes.	Clinginess tends to make Sean feel his boundaries are being violated; reminds him of his mother.	Need to have physical boundaries respected.

64.	I like to be near people, but I don't like them always hanging on to me.	Does not feel comfortable with people coming too physically close to him.	Aversion of close physical contact.
65.	After my first gay experience, I can remember thinking "this isn't right." etc. Men aren't supposed to do this. You have sex with a woman, not with a man. And trying to deny it. Wishing it had never happened. I never wanted it to happen again.	Inner conflict is experienced after first gay encounter. Superego infuses him with thoughts of guilt and morality. Attempts to use denial to cope with his anxiety; resolves to "never" let it happen again. Experiences remorse.	Cognitive dissonance as anxiety-creating. Superego as impulse controller. Inner Conflict. Rejection of Homosexual Impulses.
66.	And then a year later or so, I was out. I can't even remember any more.	After the initial confusion, a year later he is "out."	Coming out to oneself.
67.	I felt very ambivalent about it. There was a pull towards it and a push away from it all at once.	Remembers he felt "very ambivalent" about homosexuality. Similar to an approach/avoidance conflict.	Ambivalence. Approach/avoidance conflict.
68.	I remember thinking back on it, that I <u>did</u> enjoy that first time I was sexual with another fellow. But I was afraid and didn't want to tell anyone.	Remembers he enjoyed his first homosexual experience but was also feeling afraid and secretive about it.	Homosexual self must be hidden by public self. Secrecy.
69.	My second gay encounter was at a friend's dad's office. It was exciting - the idea that we could get caught.	Part of the excitement involved in his second encounter was the idea that they might get caught.	Excitement. "Forbidden" Sex.
70.	I couldn't talk to my mom - I had no one I could talk to. I didn't talk to anybody about anything.	S. Couldn't talk to anyone about what he was experiencing. Felt alone with his conflict.	Emotional Isolation.
71.	Then I met Richard and he was really able to talk with me. It had been years of bottling things up. I just kept things inside before.	His partner fulfils a deep need for emotional intimacy after years of keeping his thoughts and feelings to himself.	Male Intimacy as Healing. Emotional Bond with a Male.
72.	I think for me the coming out process is still in process. It feels I'm scared because I'm telling you everything. It feels very strange for me to do this. Part of me wants to keep the doors shut.	S. believes the coming out phenomenon is still in process. During the interview he feels threatening. Part of him wishes to maintain privacy and secrecy.	Coming out as Process Self-Disclosure as Anxiety-Producing.

73.	When I was younger I was very emotional, but now it feels like the emotion has died away. Now I can watch the saddest movie and it's like I'm cement.	S. as a child was "very emotional." This part of him seems to have died. Even in highly emotionally arousing situations, he feels like "cement."	Inner child as Emotional Rejection of parts of 'earlier' self. Coping mechanism.
74.	I've never before told one person everything like I am now. I should maybe find a counsellor to talk to.	Relates that prior to this interview, he has never told another person "everything" about himself before. Feels perhaps he should do more of this.	Secrecy as survival. Need for Emotional Support.
75.	I wonder if after I tell you all this, you might later laugh about it and tell everyone. Not telling one person everything is a sort of security because you can't betray me if you don't know all of me. Then you won't have a lower opinion of me.	Wonders if his self-disclosure will be used against him in the form of mockery or betrayal. Self-disclosure brings a feeling of vulnerability,of being "exposed." Is concerned about what others will think of him.	Mistrust of betrayal. Authentic self fears rejection. Fear of Exposure. Secrecy = Security.
76.	When Richard and I move to Vancouver I want to start letting people know that this is the way I am and if you don't like it, that's your problem, not mine.	Wants to adopt a new persona - "Take me as I am. If you cannot, this is your problem" etc. Struggles to affirm his true self in public.	Struggle to become authentic self. Coming out to others.
77.	But gay people who are too obvious about it kind of irritate me. I don't want to be labelled as a namby pamby fairy type.	Fears being labelled as a stereotypical effeminate gay man. Judges other gay men who are "too obvious" about it.	Fear of being labelled. Rejection of effeminate gay stereotype.
78.	I've wondered if I'll always be gay. I wish I was closer to my brothers, their wives and children. And I'd love to have my own children. I've always liked the idea of marriage, having a nice home, a family, being together and growing old together.	Wonders whether his homosexuality is permanent, or temporary. Longs for "the normal life." Senses that he may never experience being married, or having a family life with his own children.	Gay identity as possibly transitory. Longing for "normality." Conflicting fantasies. "Yo-Yo" Syndrome.
79.	But I wonder after what happened to my mom and dad. My dad's sister has the strangest relationship with her husband. They haven't slept together for years.	Comforts himself with the idea that perhaps the "perfect marriage" etc. is just an illusion, based on his own witnessing of other couples.	Rationalization. Residue of Divorce.

80.	If I ever do get married, and I still think about it, of course you can't have any guarantees, but I would have to be so sure of it, you know.	Still thinks about marriage as a possibility. However, he would almost have to have a guarantee that it would work out well, which he realizes he cannot expect to get.	Heterosexual choice "must" be perfect, if made. Keeping Options open.
81.	I'd have to be very safe, but there's no guarantee. I guess I'll just have to be alone.	If he committed to marriage, he'd have to be sure he would be safe in the relationship. Since there's no "guarantee", he may have to choose to be alone.	Pain of existential choice. Isolation.
82.	Being gay in certain ways feels like being alone. I find it hard to give as much commitment as Richard has.	Being gay feels like a solitary situation. He does not feel he is as committed as his partner is.	Isolation = the familiar. Being gay feels familiar. Intimacy Dysfunction.
83.	He says "let's buy a house," but I'll say "well, let's just wait and see." I give him all sorts of answers to keep him confused because I don't know how I feel about that.	Partner urges him for proof of commitment, but S. is not able to agree to certain plans because he is still unsure of committing.	Ambivalence. Keeping options open. Inability to Commit.
84.	I am not committed to the gay lifestyle. It takes an awful lot to admit to yourself that you're different.	Feels ambivalent about assuming a gay identity and lifestyle. Admitting you are gay is admitting you are different, and this is difficult for him.	Ambivalence. Rejection of gay lifestyle. Longing for "normality." Pain of Renunciation.
85.	If you have a physical disability you have to accept it right away. But when you're something like this, you can hide it, and it's taken me a long time to admit it.	Homosexuality, unlike a physical disability, can be hidden fairly successfully. He realizes accepting this side of himself has "taken a long time."	Shame. Secrecy. Disavowed self.
86.	Mom's always saying how she'll enjoy it when we get married and she has grandchildren. Maybe that is why I still think I'd like to do that, because she has this expectation.	Painful awareness of keeping his secret from Mom and disappointing her expectations of him. Wonders if he still fantasizes about getting married in order to please his mother.	Need to fulfil societal role expectations is very powerful. Need to please Mother. "Yo-Yo Syndrome.
87.	As for myself, I no longer feel I have to pretend. I think in admitting it to myself I've crossed a barrier or something. It's hard to put into words.	S. feels he no longer has to hid his "true self." In admitting his homosexuality to himself, he has crossed an important boundary which is hard to describe verbally.	Coming out to oneself is like crossing an invisible barrier.

88.	I've always felt before that I was two people. The person inside who wanted to have male friends. And then I was the person outside that everyone saw have girlfriends, go to parties, and do the normal things.	Recognizes he has had a split self - The inner secret self (gay) and the outer public self (who appeared "normal" etc.)	Split self. Inner vs. Outer Self. Normal vs. Abnormal. Bi-sexual Option.
89.	Now I feel like I've stopped that part of me - that I don't have to pretend any more. There was always this barrier - almost in the sense that I had to be who I wasn't. Now I don't have to do that any more.	Feels he has stopped trying to "be who I wasn't." Is beginning to feel less shame around presenting his inner gay self to the outside world.	Struggle for authenticity. False self is losing power. Coming Out to Oneself.
90.	That feels a lot better.	This gives him a sense of freedom and relief.	True self as key to freedom and peace.
91.	I don't have to hide my real self behind what is "normal" any more. I can say "Okay, this is me."	Realizes he used to hide his "real" (true) self behind a false persona of "normality." Now he accepts himself for who he is, and declares this more openly.	Self-Acceptance. Emergence of true self.
92.	It feels like I've had a weight lifted from my shoulders. I'm free to do what I want.	Acceptance of the true inner self leads to a feeling of great relief and brings him freedom.	Relief in releasing burden of toxic shame.
93.	I can still say I think I would like to get married and have children, but I don't know if that will happen or not.	However, he still fantasizes about the possibility of a wife and children.	Necessity of keeping options open. "Yo-Yo Syndrome."
94.	Who knows, maybe I'll meet a woman one day and I can tell her all about myself and she'll accept it all.	Wonders if, after all, he'll meet a woman who is totally accepting of <u>all</u> of him as he is.	Ideal woman/family fantasy. Bisexual Option.
95.	When I think this is a fantasy, I also think, "Well, it would be kind of neat." But I may close it down before I give it a chance to mature.	Sees this as a possibility, albeit a fantasy. Senses he may withdraw from such a possibility before he gives it a chance to become reality.	Hope vs. doubt. Keeping options open.
96.	It's funny how much Richard reminds me of my dad. He's tall, my dad's tall. He's slim, my dad's slim. They both laugh in a similar way. Hugging Richard seems to fill something for me.	Notes that partner has similarities to his father. Getting physically close to his partner fills a need for S.	Male partner as Father Figure. Recovery of Lost Father. Erotic Attachment to Father.

97.	It fills a need for male affection. I had no affection from my dad or brothers. It feels good to have the attention and the affection from him that I never had from my dad.	Interprets that physical closeness with R. fills his need for affection and physical closeness that he never received from his father.	Male partner as Father-figure. Recovery of Lost Father.
98.	If I could, I'd like to tell my dad that I've missed him as I've grown up, and that I wish he could have been there more. I'd like to find out what he really thinks about his sons, about me. Whether he's missed us. Why he left, why he abandoned us. I'd like to know why.	Senses he has much unfinished business with his father. Longing for emotional intimacy with his father; needs answer to many questions related to his sense of his abandonment by his father. Search for understanding, for answers that remain questions.	Adult child wishes for reconnection with Father. Need for answers. Search for understanding.
99.	I don't know if I'll ever completely sort all this out in a permanent way. That makes me feel anxious - as if I'll always be struggling with this dilemma.	Wonders if this inner struggle to become himself will ever end. Doubts the possibility of a definitive resolution. Anxiety over a perpetual struggle with this dilemma.	Yearning for wholeness, peace, resolution of internal struggle. Permanent dilemma?

Table 4

Thematic Clusters of Sean's Experience

1. Identity Confusion
   (1, 2, 3, 25, 52, 53, 65, 67, 83, 88, 89, 91, 99)
2. Coming Out to Oneself / Others
   (66, 72, 75, 76, 84, 85, 87, 89, 90, 91, 92, 99)
3. Lost / Distant Father
   (12, 13, 22, 23, 32, 33, 34, 35, 36, 38, 40, 41, 96, 98)
4. Identification with Mother
   (12, 21, 22, 23, 26, 28, 31, 32, 59, 60, 61, 86)
5. "Yo-Yo" Syndrome
   (52, 78, 80, 86, 93, 94, 99)
6. Bisexual Option
   (56, 58, 61, 80, 86, 93, 94, 99)
7. The Outsider
   (16, 17, 18, 46, 48, 81, 82)
8. Awareness of Homosexual Urges
   (1, 2, 8, 47, 49, 51, 68, 69)
9. Homosexuality as Ego Alien
   (4, 5, 37, 52, 55, 65, 67, 77, 84, 85)
10. Shame / Secrecy
    (9, 54, 68, 72, 75, 85)
11. Need for Male Intimacy
    (39, 41, 45, 71, 96, 97)
12. Surrogate Spouse
    (27, 28, 29, 30, 44)

13. Prehomosexual Awakening
    (6, 7, 8, 96, 97)
14. Objectification of Homosexual Impulse
    (5, 49, 65)
15. Intimacy Dysfunction
    (41, 42, 43, 63, 64, 82, 83)
16. Aversion to Female Touch
    (42, 44, 45, 59, 62, 63)
17. Need for Approval
    (50, 89, 90, 91)
18. Dysfunctional Family
    (10, 11, 12, 25, 79)
19. Idealized Early Childhood
    (21, 24, 39)
20. Emotional Isolation
    (70, 73, 74, 75)
21. Existential Necessity of Choice
    (81, 87, 99)
22. Family Role as "The Sensitive One"
    (27, 28, 29)
23. Sibling Rivalry
    (26,27)

Overall Synthesis of Sean's Experience

Sean's earliest memories are of a happy childhood which ended painfully at age seven with his parent's divorce. One of the most poignant themes emerging from his data is the ongoing grief he feels over his profoundly unsatisfactory relationship with his father (13,22,32,33,34,35,36,38,40,41, 96,98). Sean feels his father essentially abandoned the family, in marrying another woman soon after the divorce. He experienced this as a wrenching change from the earlier years when "Dad was always around ... We went fishing, he used to play with us, we'd wrestle. He was a lot of fun. I can remember enjoying spending time with him" (24). After this time, Sean felt betrayed and abandoned by his father whom he subsequently saw little of (33). In order to cope with these painful feelings of loss, abandonment and anger, Sean divorces himself emotionally from his father whom he no longer thinks of as his father, but rather as an impersonal uncle. In spite of his continued attempts to contact his father and to communicate with him, his efforts continue to end in pain, frustration and disappointment. Part of him feels almost resigned to this loss, yet he states: "I feel sad every time I talk about my dad. I talk to friends who have grown up with their fathers, gone out for dinner with their fathers, or sat and talked with just their fathers. I would have liked to do that" (40).

One of the reactive consequences of this loss for Sean was his forming a deep emotional attachment to and

identification with his mother, for whom he felt an ambivalent mixture of genuine empathy and concern on the one hand, and irritation with her "overly-emotional" vulnerability and neediness on the other (12,23,26,28,31,45, 59,60,61,86). Being the most sensitive of the three boys (27,28,29), his role as "surrogate spouse" to his mother unfolded predictably: "I was the sensitive one ... My brothers never showed any emotion. They seemed cold and uncaring, but maybe I was over-sensitive towards her" (27). He sometimes resents the pressure of this role: "... she shouldn't call me up all the time. Often I've felt it's been too much. I'm not her counsellor. I tend to carry her problems around with me" (30). Sean speculates that his irritation with both female physical touch and his later avoidance of emotional intimacy with women (42,44,59,62,63) is the result of this early ambivalent identification with his mother's pain, mixed with a longing for his absent father. He encapsulates this succinctly in this revealing statement: "Mom's vulnerable and she touches me. Dad's invulnerable and he doesn't touch me. He always seemed very secure and safe. Never showed any emotion about anything. My Mom, though, was an emotional basket case" (45).

Sean remembers as a child spending a great deal of time in solitary activities (16), which became for him a way of being-in-the-world. Isolating himself also became a way for him to cope with the problems at home, his lack of friends in school, having to adjust to new schools in foreign countries, and to the confusion and loneliness he felt as a teenager

regarding sexual orientation issues. He identifies himself as a loner and an outsider (16,17,18,19,46,48,81,82), and actually enjoys being alone much of the time, even though he acknowledges his air of social aloofness may be a defensive strategy against being negatively judged and hurt by others (19). Not surprisingly, this solitary persona masks a more authentic need for approval and acceptance (50,89,90,91).

Sean's interview reveals numerous examples of homoerotic fantasies, (1,2,8,47,49,51,68,69) of which some of the earlier ones (6,7,8) could be interpreted as prehomosexual: "I liked going to swimming pools as a kid - being with other men. I liked to hang out more with male friends than with female. I thought about them when I went to bed at night" (7).

As the homosexual urges gained in intensity in his teens, Sean began to feel increasingly confused about his "true" identity and recalls experiencing himself as feeling split inside: "I've always felt before that I was two people. The person inside who wanted to have male friends. And then I was the person outside that everyone saw have girlfriends, go to parties and do normal things" (88). He struggled to present a "normal" persona to the outside world while at the same time wrestling privately with his homosexual urges - urges that seemed disturbingly alien to his ego (4,5,37,52,55,65,67,77,84). After his first homosexual encounter at age twenty, Sean felt guilty, upset and confused (3). In order to cope with the contradictory feelings he experiences, Sean dissociates himself from the experience and

objectifies the impulse by referring to his homosexual actions as an alien "it": "It was almost like an out of body experience. It wasn't me doing this. It was like a foreign part of me that I'd maybe been trying not to let exist" (5); "After my first gay experience, I can remember thinking 'this isn't right. Men aren't supposed to do this. You have sex with a woman, not with a man.' And trying to deny it. Wishing it had never happened. I never wanted it to happen again" (65); "I felt very ambivalent about it. There was a pull towards it and a push away from it all at once" (67). These statements reveal the core of the struggle Sean was experiencing as he tried to understand his inner confusion - bewildering struggles of id versus superego, inner versus outer self, approach/avoidance conflicts and heterosexual versus homosexual impulses - all of which are cloaked in a veil of shame, isolation and secrecy (9,54,68,72,75,85).

Sean's heterosexual experiences began at age fifteen when his mother encouraged him to become romantically involved with a twenty-one year old friend of hers (56,57). He remembers feeling "disappointed" in the sex (58), and admits to "going along with it almost to make mom happy. Mom has always lined up my girlfriends" (60). There appears to be a power struggle going on between Sean and his mother. He resents her attempts to control his life: "I remember I had one girlfriend that I really really liked. I enjoyed her in every way, sexually too. But my mom didn't think she was too great. That's maybe why I liked her more. Then she moved away" (61). With his other girlfriends, as soon as they got

too close or too "clingy," he would withdraw "because my mom was like that" (63). It would seem that Sean's deeply ambivalent feelings toward his mother have been generalized to his responses to most women, at least at this point in his life.

Sean expresses the "Yo-Yo Syndrome" in the way he alternates between acceptance and denial of his homosexual side. He's both attracted to and repulsed by certain aspects of the gay lifestyle (51.52,54,67,77,84), feeling judgemental about "gay people who are too obvious about it ... I don't want to be labelled as a namby pamby fairy type" (77). He wonders if his current gay lifestyle is a permanent expression of his true identity, or if it is a transitory phenomenon (78). Thoughts of the possibility of having a "normal" married life with an ideal woman still sometimes occupy his mind (80,92,95). If he were to marry, he admits he would need to "have a guarantee" that the marriage would work out - a fantasy he realizes is unlikely to become reality. (80,81). He resigns himself to the likelihood that his fate will likely be a continued solitary existence (81).

Frequently Sean's ambivalence is expressed in juxtaposed statements that alternate from one emotional polarity to the other in rapid succession as he struggles in the interview to gain clarity on his feelings. ("Yo-Yo" Syndrome). In one excerpt he says he has healed the split he feels between his inner and outer identity (88,89); that by having come out to himself and thereby identifying himself as homosexual, that "a weight has been lifted from (his) shoulders" (92), "I

don't have to pretend anymore," or "hide my real self behind what is 'normal' anymore" (91). Yet immediately following these comments he states: "I can still say I think I would like to get married and have children" (93) ..."Who knows, maybe I'll meet a woman one day and I can tell her all about myself and she'll accept it all" (94).

The pain of renunciation of alternatives is evidently too great for Sean to fully integrate within his mind at this time, and he continues to experience intrapsychic conflict over his identity. He admits being gay is something like having a "hidden disability" that takes a "long time to admit to" because it can be kept hidden from the world (85), but that he has "crossed a barrier" in beginning to admit it to himself (87). He is aware of how much his current gay partner physically resembles his father, how he "fills a need for male affection" (9), and interprets the physical closeness he feels towards his gay partner as the "attention and affection I never had from my dad" (97). Sean appears to have painful unresolved issues around his father that he continues to try to understand and accept (98). In terms of sexual orientation, his final interview statement is poignantly descriptive of the unresolved nature of his dilemma and of his yearning for resolution: "I don't know if I'll ever completely sort all this out in a permanent way. That makes me feel anxious - as if I'll always be struggling with this dilemma" (99).

David

Personal Information

David is a 21-year old theatre arts graduate, the second eldest in a family of four children. After having experienced seven heterosexual relationships in his late teens, he began having homosexual relationships at age 20. He was referred to me for counselling regarding sexual orientation issues and a chronic tendency towards depressive episodes with suicidal ideation.

Table 5

First Order Thematic Abstractions of David's Experience

Excerpts from Protocols		Paraphrases	Themes
1.	When I was four, I had tons of friends. I was very independent when I was little. In fact, an early childhood memory is when I was four, my mom would pack me a lunch, put me on the bus by myself, and off I would go to Grandma's house in Saskatchewan.	Memories of himself as capable, popular and independent as a small child.	Idealized childhood. Independence.
2.	As far as I know, I was a really bright tyke. I was open to the world. Afraid of nothing, I would let anybody and everybody know about it.	Sees himself as intelligent, bright child; fearless and "open to the world."	Perfection of Child.
3.	My role in the family is the family comedian - like the guy who breaks the ice. The guy who's got all the jokes, who's got the humour, or whatever.	Family role is that of "the comedian" - the humorous one who relieves tension with his jokes.	Family Role. Strategies for Acceptance.
4.	I'm the one that's totally "I don't care <u>what</u> you think of me type. I'm very "Take me as I am because I'm not changing for anybody" type of thing.	Cockiness, resilience - early feelings of "I'm fine as I am." Early self-assurance.	Reaction Formation.
5.	I'm very different at home than I am with my friends. With my friends I'm more self-conscious and more aware of trying to do the right thing.	Assumes a different role at home than he does with friends. Feels more self-conscious with peers, less assured. Need for approval.	Self-Consciousness. Need for Peer Approval.

6.	At home I'm more myself, except that they don't know about my sexual changes. Nobody knows, but I think they have their suspicions. Especially since I haven't had a girlfriend since August '89. And, like I've said before, I've always had girlfriends.	Feels more authentic in the family setting, yet cannot reveal his true sexual self to them. Senses their "suspicions," especially since he now hasn't had a girlfriend for a while.	Family Suspicion. Inner Self versus Outer Self.
7.	When I was 9 or 10, I started to put my older brother on a pedestal. I wanted to be just like him. He was the family rebel. The first one to become cool. I became cool later. He was the silent rebel type.	Put his brother on a pedestal. Admires him as he seemed strong, rebellious, "cool."	Hero Worship of brother. Masculine Ideal. Sibling Rivalry.
8.	I wanted lots of attention - he didn't want any attention - He just wanted to do his own thing. He was very much his own person.	Senses differences between himself and his brother. Brother's disdain of attention, versus his own need for it.	Need for Attention. Comparison to Brother.
9.	I loved my mom when I was little. I think more than I loved my dad. I loved to have her hold me. I loved that. She was my mom and she was always there.	When he was young, he thinks he loved mom more than dad. Loved the physical contact with her. Mom is there, is reliable and dependable.	Identification with Mother. Mother as the Dependable One.
10.	When there was a crisis, if my Mom was there, everything would be fine.	Sensed that mom could handle crises and could resolve them well.	Mother as Dependable One.
11.	In the last few years I've looked at her as just a woman, as more of a friend. Although I can't talk to her like a friend - There's still that border.	Recently, sees mom as a person in her own right, as a friend rather than just "mom." Yet senses there is still a boundary (parent/child) between them.	Mother as Friend. Emotional Intimacy with Mother.
12.	Sometimes lately when I've been feeling really depressed, I've felt so sick. I just wanted to get on the phone to her and cry my eyes out.	Lately, wants to reach out to mom for support when he's been frightened and depressed. Wishes to communicate authentically with mom about his pain.	Emotional Pain. Confusion. Need for Maternal Support.

13.	I had this knot in my stomach and I almost started crying on the phone. She goes "what's wrong?" and I couldn't say anything about my struggling with this bisexuality thing.	Felt strong urge to share his dilemma and his secret with his mom, but couldn't in spite of his need. Cannot tell her about his struggle with bisexuality.	Secrecy. Pressure. Bisexuality. Emotional Isolation.
14.	So I say "I'm thoroughly sick and I have to go." And I just hate that. I hate that I can't talk to her.	Makes an excuse, then chastises himself for not being honest - for not being able to share this with her.	Avoidance. Shame. Fear of Exposure. Emotional Isolation.
15.	I think my dad would be more accepting of bisexuality than my mom, even though I feel closer to my mom.	Senses father might be more understanding and accepting of bisexuality than mom, though he feels emotionally closer to mom.	Father as Accepting. Identification with Mother.
16.	Although my dad's been very supportive, he's been sort of quiet and stands back. My mom was always the disciplinarian. If my dad would strike us, he would cry more than we did.	Dad is quiet and more aloof. Mom is the disciplinarian. Dad cannot handle disciplining us - he falls apart himself.	Distant Father. Mother as the Strong One. Weak Father.
17.	My mom is the stronger. My dad hates that. He hates it when he has to make decisions.	Mom is "the strong one." Dad is "the weaker one." He avoids responsibility and hates to make decisions.	Strong Mother. Weak Father. Mother as Leader.
18.	I'm more aware of my dad now than when I was younger.	Senses increasing awareness of his father as a person.	Empathy for Father.
19.	I feel like my mom and I were more on the same sort of wavelength than my dad and I. Dad was closer to my older brother.	Identifies more commonalities with mom than dad. Bonds with mother, while older brother bonds with father.	Identification with Mother. Father - Brother Bond.
20.	Dad mainly just took us places, you know. Taking us out, taking us skating or to the beach. Dad was dad, but I <u>loved</u> Mom.	Dad is the "doer" - the activity organizer and chauffeur. Dad is/was just dad, but mom is "loved."	Father as "Doer." Love, admiration for Mother.

21.	I think I just liked Dad when I was little. It wasn't like he did anything wrong. He never verbally or mentally or sexually abused me. But I think he pulled away from me. I don't know. Maybe I felt like he thought I was weird, and he kind of pulled away.	I liked dad, but <u>loved</u> mom. Senses father's distancing himself from him. Senses father's ambivalence towards him. Feels father pulled away because he thought his son was "weird."	Unconscious Withdrawal of Father from Son. The "Different" Child.
22.	Mom was more in tune with me because she herself was more like me when she was little.	Identification with mother. Notes their similarities.	Identification with Mother.
23.	The first time I hugged my dad was when I was a teenager, and I totally blew him. It was so funny. He didn't know what to do. We went to hug and bonked heads because we both went to the same shoulder.	Awkwardness in expressing affection towards father. Senses dad's discomfort with physical contact with his son. Sees the humour in this.	Father - Son Physical Awkwardness.
24.	I only remember kissing my dad maybe once - goodnight. He was away at work a lot, but was mostly home for supper.	Almost no memories of any physical contact with father. Absent father who was away from home, unavailable and distant.	Lack of Physical Contact with Father. Absent Father.
25.	Mom's like me, you know. If she doesn't get her own way she'll sulk, she'll just sulk.	Identifies with emotional patterns of his mother. Learns to manipulate by sulking to get one's own way, just like mom.	Identification with Mother. Female Manipulative "Strategies."
26.	My dad is always the one to patch things up, smooth things over, and make sure everything's OK.	Dad's role as the peacemaker. Dad gives his power away to ensure family peace; to return the family system to equilibrium.	Father as Peacemaker.
27.	As a result he gets really stressed. He's got a bad back, a bad heart - more physical ailments just because of always being the one to fix things. My mom would start a fuss and he would have to smooth it over.	Constantly giving away his power exacts a physical toll on dad. Mom creates a "fuss," dad has to fix it. Dad capitulates to Mom.	Parental Power Imbalance. Mother as Emotional One. Stressed Father.

28.	When I was little I was terribly uncoordinated for the longest time. When I was <u>really</u> little I was fine - just running around. Then I went through a phase where I was clumsy, uncoordinated. I didn't play sports for a while. I just started playing again in Junior High.	Memories of childhood physical awkwardness and uncoordination. At first, he felt "normal;" later he felt clumsy. Withdrew from sports as a child temporarily.	Childhood Physical Uncoordination Shame. Avoidance of Team Sports.
29.	I never started fights with other kids, but I would stick up for myself if I was being shoved around.	Avoided starting conflict as a child, but would defend himself if bullied.	Avoidance of Aggressiveness. Need to Defend Oneself.
30.	Once another kid gave me a black eye, but I ran away. I fled. I haven't been a very aggressive person, but I have had a lot of undercurrent anger. If you really got me mad, I think I'd really freak out.	Fled from aggression. Senses he is not outwardly aggressive, but buries anger inside. Feels he might lose control if he was pushed beyond his limits of intolerance.	Avoidance of Aggressiveness. Suppression of Anger. Shame.
31.	In junior high I wanted to be in a fight just to prove to people that I was a man, that I could defend myself and that I probably was OK. I may not know how to fight but I could probably scrap, you know, just kind of scrap.	Wished to demonstrate his manhood in junior high by getting into a fight. If he could at least "scrap," he would prove he was "okay" to his peers.	Need to Demonstrate Masculinity. Need for Peer Acceptance.
32.	I was pushed around a few times, but I'd say "cool it." You know, "pardon me." I always wanted to go "Yeah! this is your chance!" but then I'd go "No, no."	Ambivalence between retreating from a confrontation and accepting the challenge to fight. Makes decision to retreat Chronic tension between competing impulses.	Ambivalence. Avoidance of Aggression.
33.	Lately I've made more of a conscious decision to be a peacemaker. There's no need for fighting. It doesn't solve anything.	Chooses the peaceful option consciously. Reasons with himself that physical fighting isn't likely to solve problems.	Rationalization. Struggle for Identity.

34.	I played a bit of baseball, but never hockey. I never thought I was good so I always held back. You know, I seriously believed to this day that I have the ability - Like, I could have been a fantastic basketball player in high school, but I held back because I planted it in my head that I was no good.	Awareness of how lack of self-confidence in sports has affected his performance negatively. Fear of failure holds him back. Automatic thought is: "I am no good at sports."	Self-Doubt. Fear of Failure. Avoidance of Team Sports.
35.	I couldn't be relaxed enough to have fun. It's always that "I've got to be perfect" you know, and that goes back to when I was little too.	Tension, awareness of need to appear "perfect." Sets impossibly high standards for himself.	Perfectionism. Self-Consciousness.
36.	I probably got that from my mom. She'd be the one to say "Better make the right decision because you don't want to make any mistakes."	Identification with mother's fear of making the wrong decision. Mistakes are to be avoided.	Identification with Mother. Perfectionism of Mother.
37.	What really bothers me about my mom is - something bad will happen, and then she'll bring it up over and over and go "If only I had, I should have done this, or that." She won't let things die. She has to keep dwelling on them. She feels "Don't make any mistakes, because then you'll have to live with them forever." I do that too.	Negatively judges mom's tendency to ruminate over perceived mistakes "over and over." Senses she cannot let issues go. Senses mom's fear of making mistakes leaves one with a feeling of permanent regret and pain. Sees this in himself.	Identification with Mother. Perfectionism of Mother. Fear of Mistakes.
38.	I had my first sexual feelings when I was about 12. I was home sick from school and I was in the closet with a Penthouse magazine. So I saw the women and I saw the boobs, and - "What's this? I don't understand it, but I think it's exciting. These naked boobs? Yeah! Get a load of those!"	Earliest awareness of sexual awakening at age 12. Senses excitement, curiosity, yet lack of understanding. Awareness of forbidden aspects of viewing naked females in a magazine while hidden "in the closet."	Sexual Awakening. Excitement. Heterosexual attraction.
39.	My fantasies were all with females at first. I just fantasized about female bodies.	Earliest sexual fantasies were solely about females.	Heterosexual Fantasies.

40.	I discovered masturbation when I was 12 too. I remember I tried it in the bathtub and I remember thinking about a certain girl that was my brother's age, so that was definitely a heterosexual reaction.	Fantasized about girl while masturbating, and confirms this as "definitely a heterosexual reaction." Assurance to self of "normality"?	Sexual Awakening. Heterosexual Fantasies.
41.	And then - this is really bizarre. One night there was a big thunderstorm outside. My dad came into my room and said "There's a storm outside. And by the way, it's OK to masturbate. I did it when I was young." That's the only thing he ever talked to me about sex. And while he said this, he was crying. I just don't get it. That's the weirdest thing - one of the weirdest images I have.	Dad's reassurance to his son that the act of masturbation is okay confuses David, particularly since dad was very emotional when he said it. David senses this behaviour as strange, confusing, "weird."	Father as strange. Father as Unstable.
42.	It's almost like he was reliving his own past. So that he didn't have to feel guilty about it, which he probably still did. My parents weren't very sexual people. I could never imagine my parents having sex. I cannot imagine that sort of pleasure for them. I still can't.	Awareness of father's sexual inhibitions. Analyzes motives for dad's behaviour. Cannot imagine parents as sexual beings having sexual pleasure.	Father's Sexual Inhibitions. Parents viewed as Asexual by Son. Sexual Guilt.
43.	I feel like my mom was sexually repressed for some reason. Like she was being a real martyr. That's the feeling I get about my mom. She's such a martyr, you know.	Sees mom as a sexual martyr who was sexually repressed.	Mother as Martyr. Sexual Repression.

44.	But it cracks me up, because when we watch a football game, my mom will say "Oh, I just love to see them running around in those tight little pants - I just like to see their tight little bums." Seriously, Mom gets off on that. She also likes shopping for men's underwear. She gets these little kicks. Isn't that a hoot?	Is nevertheless aware of Mom's attraction for men's buttocks. Senses there is something kinky in her response to sexuality, yet it is repressed. He sees this as somewhat humorous.	Mother as Sexual. Mother and Son share Attraction to Men.
45.	You know what? I have this really funny feeling that my dad has had homosexual feelings and blatantly said "Whoa, whoa ... no way! Bad, wrong, burn in hell and die! etcetera."	Wonders if his father is a latent homosexual who suppressed those feelings out of guilt and moral self-condemnation. Son receives message that homosexuality = to "burn in hell."	Father as Possibly Homosexual. Homosexuality as Taboo.
46.	That dawned on me once when we were looking at some magazines with some guys in designer clothes and my dad made a really weird comment about a guy being well-built or good looking. My dad would never say something like that ordinarily.	Has some evidence for his suspicions regarding dad's true sexual orientation. Again, perceives this in father as "weird."	Evidence of Father's Homosexual Inclinations?
47.	I see my parents as a very strange sexual match. I can't even imagine a tingle going through their bodies, even in my wildest imagination.	Parents are unsuited sexually. Cannot imagine them experiencing any kind of sensual pleasure. (Repeats this idea.)	Parents as Asexual.
48.	I think if I "came out" to him, he would be more understanding than my mom. He would say "Son, it's okay, I love you." I think my mom would cry, but my dad would be very supportive.	If David revealed his secret to his dad, he would be more tolerant than mom, who would be unhappy. Dad would be more understanding, more supportive.	Father as more Tolerant of Homosexuality.
49.	Before, my dad seemed quiet, unemotional and unaffected, emotionally distant. But lately, my dad and I always hug. We've been closer in the past little while. We've talked more than my mom and I.	Senses an important and positive change in his relationship with dad now. Much more intimacy physically and emotionally. Moving towards father, away from mother.	Newfound Intimacy with Father.

50.	I can't believe I'm saying this. When I was little I could talk to my mom about everything. And now it's like she's almost afraid of what's going to come out of my mouth I think.	Expresses surprise at this turn of events. No longer feels he can be fully authentic in conversations with mom.	Early Intimacy with Mother is Changing. Mother's Fear of Son's Sexuality.
51.	Like "Guess what Mom? I'm living with two women and getting married to both of them" you know. The original plan with Kate was that we were going to live together, as roommates. Mom said "It's just like being married" and she started crying, and I started crying.	Feels that if mom was aware of his lifestyle she would be upset. Senses mom doesn't want him to "live in sin" with a woman prior to marriage.	Mother as Moral Judge. Controlling Mother.
52.	She disapproved because she thought it meant sex before marriage. My parents are very anti sex before marriage.	Family taboo = sex before marriage.	Senses Mother's Disapproval. Sexual Shame/Guilt.
53.	The fact I've had sex before marriage is a kind of rebellion thing I think. They never explained to me why I've got these urges and stuff.	Equates his having premarital sex with rebellion against his family. Parents never told him about sexuality. Taboo topic.	Rebellion. Sex as Taboo.
54.	If I was a total heterosexual, I would probably wait until marriage you know, because it's better.	Feels he would abstain from premarital sex if he was completely heterosexual.	Heterosexual Impulses Can be Controlled.
55.	If you're heterosexual, there's no hurry, you know. I mean, I was in such a big hurry because I felt the peer pressure of being a virgin.	For heterosexuals, sex can wait because there is the security of knowing your orientation. He became sexually active due to peer pressure, and not knowing.	Heterosexuality as "Normal" Peer Pressure.
56.	My first girlfriend was when I was fifteen. We were together for a year but then it didn't work because she wanted too much from me. She was too demanding, and I didn't want to make any commitments. Maybe it was too much closeness that I wasn't ready for.	Terminated first relationship with a female because he perceived her as too demanding. He was not ready for that much closeness or commitment.	Females as Overly-Demanding. Aversion to Intimacy with Women.

57.	I've had about half a dozen relationships with women. I was 19 when I had my first sexual experience with a girl.	First sexual relationship with a girl was at 19. He has had several others since then.	First Heterosexual Encounters.
58.	My first girlfriend that I was sexual with was nice - an extremely open person. She was very loving and quite wonderful. But I was really picky with her. I didn't like her complexion. She had too many zits and was a bit too clingy at times, so I guess that was a turn off for me.	Experienced first sexual relationship as loving and wonderful. Yet senses ambivalence; was critical of her looks and her excessive dependency which became a turn off.	Heterosexual Ambivalence. Judgment Criticism of Females. Avoidance of Female Intimacy. Aversion to Clinginess of Females.
59.	Having sex with her made me feel like I was in control. Like I knew what I was doing. Then with Diane, it was my old power thing. She was 24 and I was only 19. The next, was the one that was bad. She compared me negatively to her boyfriend.	With some women, sex has made him feel powerful and in control. On another occasion, being negatively compared to another man made him feel insecure and disempowered.	Need to Control Females as Powerful, Manipulative.
60.	Cindy and Kate were both good experiences. Kate came from a very dysfunctional home. She was severely introverted. She hated her looks and her body, hated herself.	Other experiences with women were positive. However, David senses he picked a partner who felt very insecure about herself.	Positive Heterosexual Experiences with Dysfunctional Woman.
61.	We were attracted to each other but neither of us was really secure. This is when I was still heterosexual.	Realizes they may have been attracted due to mutual insecurity. Remembers that at that time he was "still heterosexual."	Self-Labelling as Heterosexual in the Past.
62.	When I first came to college I put a lot of demands on myself. I thought I had to be perfect - just perfect in everything.	Aware of his obsession to appear perfect and the stress this has on him.	Perfection.
63.	Kate really loved me - she was so wonderful. We tried to boost each other's self-esteem. We were both lost. It was amazing - a bizarre relationship.	Relationship was based on mutual neediness and feeling lost, but felt loved by Kate who was "wonderful." Describes the relationship as "bizarre."	Heterosexuality as Mutually Ego-Enhancing. Emotional Attraction towards Women.

64.	It was wonderful - I loved her, in fact I think now I still love her. Looking back, I just want to hold her and tell her everything's going to be okay. I wish I could go back in time.	Yearning for this lost love and sensing he still loves her. Wishes he could turn back the clock to that time.	Nostalgia for former Heterosexual Lover. Longing for Ideal Heterosexual Relationship.
65.	Yeah, but the sex wasn't very great because she was so insecure about herself. I think she had been abused or possibly raped when she was young. She didn't know anything about sex, so I was kind of like a teacher.	However, he admits the "sex wasn't great." He sees this as the result of her childhood abuse. Again, he needed to feel in control, to be the leader.	Unsatisfactory Heterosexual Sex Need for Control
66.	Since Kate, I've come close to having sex with other women, but haven't followed through.	Still gets close to sexual intimacy with other women, but hasn't followed through.	Avoidance of Heterosexuality.
67.	My first homosexual encounter was on July 23, 1989. That was the day I came to Al and told him I had been in love with him since December 1988.	Describes first homosexual encounter - remembers dates and time clearly. A pivotal event.	First Homosexual Experience. Falling in Love.
68.	I don't think I've ever been in love with anyone like that before. Being in love is when you experience that bittersweet pain, in that he could tell me he hated me and never wanted to see me again, and I would still come back for more.	Describes this infatuation as unlike any other he has experienced before. Bittersweet pain of aching for the adored person.	Homosexual Love as Passionate. Infatuation
69.	I loved everything about him. I didn't even love the fact that he was a guy. I loved that he was a great person. I loved his passion. That was very attractive. I loved his presence, I loved him.	The "romance stage" of falling in love. Sees only the positives in the other. Was attracted to his "passion."	Attraction to Passion Hero Worship
70.	He's very sure of himself. Very confident. Everything that I wasn't at the time. He was also very funny and very warm.	Sees him as having the attributes he did not have at that time, yet wanted. Confidence, warmth, humour.	Idolization of Ideal Masculinity Passion.

71.	Kate would say "What's wrong?" and I couldn't tell her it was Al! I'd feel pangs. I'd feel hurt - a real pain in my stomach.	Lives a double life. Is in love with a man, but still in relationship with a woman. Pang of guilt, excitement, love-sickness as nausea.	Secrecy Pain of Love.
72.	I remember thinking about the song he sang in drama class, and going home on the bus and singing it and crying the whole way there. And just feeling his passion and wanting to share his passion.	Experiences a deep emotional intensity for this person. Strongly attracted to his passion.	Homosexual Passion
73.	This passion didn't feel sexual at first. It was an intellectual attraction at first, but then later it became sexual.	Passion starts as intellectual - only later does he associate it as sexual too.	Homosexual Awakening
74.	I'd also felt a bit that way about Jake, my best friend in high school. I felt close to him, but it was a closeness we couldn't express. We were doing pot all the time and loved the feeling we had. We'd often hug each other and stuff but we wouldn't know what to do. I think I didn't understand what that was.	Remembers earlier sensations of homosexual desire, but was unaware fully of what it meant.	Awareness of Attraction towards Males Confusion
75.	Even then I fantasized about having sex with him, along with having sex with other women. I think he repressed his homosexual feelings. I don't know for a fact that he had them, but you know and you know.	Remembers fantasizing earlier about sex with a male friend. Thinks his friend suppressed these feelings.	Homosexual Fantasies. Heterosexual Fantasies.
76.	With Al it took me a long time to get up the guts to even talk to him. I'm always afraid of rejection.	Agony of self-disclosure and possible risk of rejection meant the courage was slow in coming to him.	Fear of Rejection. Uncertainty.
77.	I was living with Kate, but Al asked me to go swimming, so I dropped everything to go out with him.	Priorities and his impulse to be with the object of his desire are apparent.	Primacy of Male Love Object

78.	At his apartment, I made the first move and kissed him. I'd never kissed a guy before. It was so weird because it was like kissing myself. I remember there was a softness but there was also a masculineness about it. It was the nicest kiss I've ever had.	David makes the first physical advance. Kissing another male is like kissing himself ("weird"). Juxtaposition of masculine hardness with feminine softness. Describes this kiss as "the nicest ever."	Narcissism Cathexis of Ideal Male Masculine Essence
79.	I remember coming out to him that day. I cried and I said I'd been in love with him for eight months.	Self-disclosure is accomplished by coming out to another male. Confession yields tears - relief, joy, confusion, pain?	Confession Passion Coming Out to Another.
80.	He thought maybe I was just experimenting, but I knew I was in love with him. He had been openly gay since he was 16.	Partner suspects his ambivalence and recognizes the internal struggle involved in coming out.	Passion Homosexual Love.
81.	I was still with Kate who was 3 blocks away cooking dinner. For that whole month it was just lies, lies, lies. Deception, deception, deception.	Lives a "double life" with Kate for one month. Constant lies and deception lead to increased inner tension.	Secrecy Split Self Deception.
82.	One night I just said "I love you, but I'm not in love with you." She couldn't understand. She was screaming and crying and she left.	Another risk is taken. Courage breaks past his fear and he shares his secret with Kate.	Confession Exposure
83.	It didn't bother her that I left her for a man. It bothered her because she thought the whole year was a lie and that I hadn't really loved her. Now she doesn't want anything to do with me at all.	Partner is not distressed because he left her for a man, but due to the deception. She renounces and rejects him once he reveals the truth.	Female Rage Coming Out to Others. Taking Risks.
84.	Kissing Al felt like I was kissing that man side of me. And it didn't mean I felt gay, I just felt more of a man.	Kissing another male is associated with kissing himself and feeling more masculine, <u>not</u> with being gay.	Cathexis of Ideal Male.
85.	I felt like I had made a step - connected with a side of me.	A major boundary has been crossed and this is experienced as a reconnection with a side of himself.	Coming Out to Oneself Reconciliation of Split Self.

86.	It didn't dawn on me that this was what I had been dreaming of for months. I couldn't believe it was happening.	Realization of a longed for fantasy. Awe and wonder that it was unfolding.	Unconscious becomes Conscious. Awe. Coming Out to Oneself.
87.	I kind of denied it at first. But I wanted everything.	Opposing impulses of denial and desire of homosexual attraction. Homosexual experience and heterosexual experience = "everything."	Denial vs. Desire. Bisexual Options.
88.	All the while I was saying to him "I'm not sure. I think I'm bisexual. I don't know whether I'm gay or not."	Cognitive dissonance created by the tension of the situation. Sexual orientation confusion. Opts for idea of being bisexual.	Bisexual Option. Confusion. Ambivalence.
89.	He's say "Well, I'd say since you've done this, that means you're gay." He was convinced that the bisexuality thing was all in my head.	Gay partner suggests bisexuality is a myth - that he is actually gay.	Homosexuality as The True Inner Self
90.	He's very like that. It's black or its white.	Partner sees sexuality in black and white terms, not as a continuum.	Either-Or "Choice"
91.	I don't know what I think. Some days I feel really gay and some days I feel really straight. I feel bad and gross whenever I see normal couples, but maybe that's just the society thing brewing in my head.	Ambivalence over tension created by orientation confusion. Feels gay at times (but this is "bad and gross") and feels straight at times (i.e. "normal," society's expectation).	"Yo-Yo" Syndrome Shame Rejection of Homosexual Stereotypes
92.	Maybe it's a fantasy that I want to be heterosexual. Maybe I'm not really.	Speculates that desire to be heterosexual may be a fantasy. The nature may be homosexual.	Urge for Normalcy Inner vs. Outer Identity
93.	You know, the funny thing is I could be heterosexual but I wouldn't be happy, because I'd see a guy walk by and my head would turn. But that happens with women too! Oh, it's so totally confusing. I don't know. I don't know. I have no answers.	Aware of attraction for both men and women and the ensuing confusion. Feels there is "no answer." Agony of sensing the necessity of choice.	"Yo-Yo" Syndrome Confusion Split Self

94.	It's still so confusing, because I want a family. See, I don't know whether I want a wife, but I do want a best friend for the rest of my life.	Fear over possible fate of never having his own children. Unclear if he wants a wife, or a best friend for life.	Keeping Options Open Pain of Renunciation Ambivalence Emotional Intimacy with Women.
95.	I don't know if I want one woman to be by my side for the rest of my life, but I do want kids very much. I was going to be married when I was 23 and have three kids at least.	Senses he wants children, but not a wife. Loss of earlier fantasy of a family.	Fantasy of Idealized Family Pain of Renunciation Ambivalence
96.	She would be the perfect woman. I wouldn't have to worry that I'd made the wrong choice. I was always afraid that I'd make the wrong choice. I've got to make a choice. Then I'd get married and I'd go "Oh, no!"	Perfection obsession. Senses danger of making "the wrong choice." Marriage implies a choice, and no way out of it if it's the wrong choice.	Perfectionism Idealized Woman Fear of Choosing
97.	I wouldn't settle for less. She'd have to be the right match for me. I was sure God would bring us together. God's already got her picked out. She's out there, I just haven't met her yet.	Cannot see settling for less than the ideal woman. Only God has power and control over this. It is all ordained by a superior power. He has yet to meet her, that's all.	Idealized Woman Need for Guarantee Keeping Options Open
98.	If I made the wrong choice, there's no way I could divorce. My aunt's divorced and it's a family secret.	Marriage is forever; divorce is impossible - i.e. - marriage as a trap.	Marriage as Trap Family Shame
99.	I'm very influenced by my parents. Maybe I'm being bisexual to please my parents.	Awareness of strong influence of parental expectations. Considers possibility that bisexual identity may be based on need to be acceptable to his parents.	Need for Approval Bisexual Option.
100.	I don't know. I don't know. Sometimes I wonder if even this homosexual thing is just an escape from having to deal with a relationship with a woman, just because I haven't had very good sexual experiences and stuff. Almost because I don't understand them or something.	Confusion of "not knowing." Wonders if homosexuality is a way to avoid relationships with women due to unsatisfactory previous experiences. Senses he may not understand women very well.	"Yo-Yo" Syndrome Homosexuality as Avoidance Strategy Female Intimacy Dysfunction.

101.	Even with men, there's no perfect relationship, but that's always been in my mind. It's got to be at least semi-perfect or semi-right. There can't be any fights or problems or it's not a relationship.	Acknowledges futility of seeking perfection in relationships. Yet still clings to idea that any relationship has to be at least "semi-perfect." Problems are unacceptable.	Perfectionism Immaturity
102.	Al and I eventually broke up because I felt we weren't a perfect match, so we couldn't continue.	Less than perfect match means the termination of the relationship.	Destructive Perfectionism
103.	Also, I wasn't sure if this gayness was what I wanted. I couldn't continue doing that to him when I wasn't sure. It's almost like I was afraid to see where it was going to go, I was afraid of going too far with this gay stuff.	Ambivalence about homosexuality. Awareness of responsibility to the other. Fear of assuming a total homosexual identity.	Ambivalence towards Gay Lifestyle Identity Confusion
104.	I couldn't say to him "I know I love you" like he could to me.	Uncertainty about his true feelings toward male partner. Inability to declare himself openly.	Ambivalence
105.	I still wasn't sure I was gay. That plus the fact that we were a great match, but we weren't perfectly compatible.	Uncertainty about the sexual orientation. Repeats idea that any partner must be compatible in every sense in order for him to commit.	Avoidance of intimacy by insistence on perfection
106.	Al and I could talk intimately, but not as intimately as I've talked with my female friends. I'm really closer to female friends right now in my life.	Verbal intimacy is easier for him with women than with men. Awareness of emotional closeness to female friends.	Women as Friends Emotional Intimacy with Women
107.	The women I've been with have been more dominant sexually, but I think I'm the more dominant with men.	More submissive role sexually with females, more dominant role sexually with males.	Role Versatility Females as Sexually Dominant. Bisexual Option.

108.	When I was with a woman and I felt she was dominant, I felt less of a man and I felt more insecure. But when you're with a man and he's dominant, it's okay. Because men are supposed to be dominant. So I could play the submissive role and it would be okay and it would be a turn on.	Awareness of female dominance threatens his sense of security and masculinity. Submission with another male is acceptable, in fact it is arousing. Awareness of "playing a role" with another man.	Female Power Role Reversal Submission as Sexual Stimulant
109.	I could also be the dominant one, and that could be a turn on.	Possibilities to assume different roles are enlarged when one is having homosexual sex.	Homosexual Role Versatility
110.	Either way, it's a turn on with men. With women, I <u>have</u> to be dominant.	With men, either role is possible - with women, he "has" to be dominant, yet isn't.	Homosexual Passion Ambivalence towards Females
111.	When I had sex with Kate it was like I was the only one enjoying myself.	Senses females partner's sexual dissatisfaction. Feels guilty that she didn't enjoy it like he did.	Female as Sexual Martyr
112.	Sex has always been more emotional with men. Al was my lover. The women were my girlfriends (partners), but Al was my lover.	Distinguishes difference between male partner as a lover (i.e. passionate, emotional) versus sex with women as "friends", (not as emotional).	Homosexual Passion
113.	With Al, we were connecting soul to soul. Our minds as well as our bodies.	Sensed a deep physical and spiritual connection with a male lover. Mind and body unity.	Homosexual Passion
114.	None of the sexual relationship I've had with women so far have been very loving. It's either been just fun, or like a duty.	Sex with women is described as fun, or a duty, but not loving.	Unsatisfactory Heterosexual Relationships
115.	Since Al, I've had lots of relationships with men. It makes me want to puke when I think about going to the bar and picking some guy up just for sex.	Although he has had many relationships with men, he is repelled by the thought of picking up sexual partners in gay bars.	Rejection of Gay Lifestyle

116.	I'd always fantasized about having sex with guys that were anonymous. Like strangers, or real jock types. But if we're not connecting upstairs (in the mind), there's no turn on.	Yet, he fantasizes about sex with strangers. But then admits there would be "no turn-on" if there wasn't also an intellectual connection.	Contradiction Sequential Ambivalence Homosexual Fantasies
117.	I'm really comfortable having sex with guys. But here was Bob, pretending to be having sex with me, but he was really awkward and uncomfortable, and that made me feel uncomfortable.	Maintains he is comfortable with homosexual sex. However, if partner is uncomfortable, his comfort is compromised, and he too can feel awkward.	Homosexuality as Comfortable Homosexuality as Uncomfortable
118.	This feels embarrassing to tell you all this stuff.	Embarrassment at revealing his inner process regarding his sexuality.	Shame
119.	It was weird and he felt guilty. He wouldn't talk to me for the rest of the visit. He's got to keep reassuring himself that he's a man, you know.	Describes homosexual encounter as "weird." Sees partner as feeling guilty - as one who needs to assure himself of his masculinity.	Projection? Self-doubt Crisis in masculinity
120.	It was like, the lights had to be out - He said "Don't talk to me, don't look at me, just do it."	Initiation into homosexual act is done in secret, in the dark - Faceless, anonymous - no eye contact.	Shame Fear Secrecy
121.	I've been dealing with that homosexual side of me for 3 years now. This was probably his first and last experience.	Refers to split in self as his "homosexual side." A part of himself he's been aware of for 3 years now.	Split Self Coming Out to Oneself
122.	I'm still sorting out this orientation thing. I feel more and more comfortable with the fact I'm gay.	The evolution of his sexual orientation is still in process. It feels increasingly comfortable to accept "the fact" that he is gay.	Coming out as a Process
123.	When I get attracted to women, I'm more attracted to their minds than their bodies. I'm very attracted to a woman's mind. I still find women attractive that way.	Attraction to women is more intellectual than physical.	Attraction towards Female Intellect

124.	In terms of identity as a bisexual, I think I'm probably leaning towards homosexuality. If heterosexuality was a "1," and Homosexuality was a "10," I'd be about a 7.	Senses he is leaning towards a homosexual identity rather than bisexual.	Blending of Inner and Outer Identity Self-labelling as Homosexual. Struggle for Identity. Coming out to Oneself.
125.	But I'm still attracted to women. I'm head over heels in love with Mary, still. Madly in love with her. She's an actress.	Yet he remains attracted to women. Talks about a woman he's "madly in live with."	"Yo-Yo" Syndrome. Heterosexual Attraction.
126.	She doesn't come across as being really pretentious as a lot of women do. It's more like we're on the same wavelength. We have the same sense of humour about things. I mean, we just click.	Likes Mary because he feels they have many similarities. As opposed to other women, she seems "unpretentious."	Idealized Woman
127.	I'm attracted to who she is as a person - I think sexually too. I've fantasized about us making love. Notice I say "making love," because I don't think I'd "have sex" with Mary.	He is attracted to her physically and mentally. Mary, he "makes love to" in his fantasies rather than "having sex." A more "total" response.	Sexual Fantasy with Idealized Woman
128.	Mary would be closer to a perfect relationship than I could ever imagine.	Imagines Mary as the ideal woman who could offer a perfect relationship.	Perfect Heterosexual Love
129.	But even if I got her, I think I would still be attracted to men. I mean, that wouldn't stop.	Yet, I would remain always attracted to men. Homosexual impulses would not stop.	"Yo-Yo" Syndrome Split Self
130.	Right now I'm in a relationship with Peter, but it's like I'm too co-dependent. I'm needing more time to myself. Time to learn to like myself. Right now I don't feel secure in a relationship unless I'm secure in myself.	Wonders if he is too dependent in relationship with Peter. Senses the need for space, for time to work on his own issues.	Need for Solitude Need for Wholeness Ambivalence. Awareness of Unresolved Identity Issues.
131.	When I'm with Peter, I'm kind of faking it. I'm kind of being inauthentic. I'm being myself, but I'm trying to be someone strong then I am.	Behaves inauthentically in his relationship with Peter. Does not feel as strong as he acts. True self versus false self.	Contradiction Inner Conflict False Self versus True Self

132.	I don't want him to see me weak because I'm already strong in his eyes, and he really respects me for being 21 and being so secure. That makes me giggle, because I don't think I'm secure.	Is aware of playing a role in this relationship - of acting more capable and secure than he truly feels. If the other sees me as strong, maybe I will <u>be</u> strong.	False self vs. True Self Need for Acceptance
133.	He's really attracted to me - to my pulling away from him. You know, it's like what he can't have he wants.	Power of distancer versus pursuer in the relationship. Senses his partner's attraction is due to his maintaining tension and a certain air of unavailability.	Dance of Intimacy
134.	I base my feelings of my worth on success. It's always been a high priority. I should know better, but I can't make it go away. And that's a lot of what my depression is all about.	Feels his depression is due to his setting very high goals and standards for himself - of wanting success. Doubts the wisdom of this, yet cannot stop.	Perfectionism Depression
135.	It's like I know I'm better than what I'm acting like. This is a really old feeling.	Split between actual self and potential self. Senses he is not what he could be - old feeling.	Self-Criticism Inner Conflict
136.	Because I know I'm capable of perfection. Capable of reaching that peak. Like, he might not reach it, she might not reach it, but I don't care. <u>I</u> can reach it. And if I don't, I crash.	Affirms idea that he is capable of "perfection." Others may not be, but he senses he can be. If he fails, he will "crash."	Perfectionism Despair Narcissism
137.	That's where my depression comes from.	Perfectionistic impulse feeds his depression and self-doubt.	Depressive Cycle
138.	I need to start learning from my mistakes. I'm always learning. I've done so my personal growth in the last year it's incredible. I'm actually proud of myself.	Senses need to learn from mistakes. Feels proud of his progress in personal growth.	Pride, Confidence Hope.
139.	But there's my evil twin. Really, I'm sick inside.	Yet ... is aware of his shadow ("evil twin").	Contradiction Split-Self "Yo-Yo" Syndrome

140.	The evil twin wants me to be perfect. The evil twin wants everything too fast. David knows better. He loves himself as he is.	Perfectionistic side = the "evil twin." Other side accepts and loves himself as he is.	Self-loathing versus Self-Acceptance
141.	I just feel I have to prove something to my family. That I can be something other than David the comic.	Need to prove to his family he is more than the family comedian.	Need for Acceptance Family Role
142.	I've always felt the least manly of all my brothers. And the most fucked up. And the most troubled and undirected.	Compared to his brothers he feels he lacks masculinity. Self-denigration. Feels he cannot measure up.	Self-Rejection Self-Labelling Sibling Rivalry. The Different One.
143.	I feel people are always judging me. I almost feel like a pansy ass.	Feels judged by others. Applies denigrating label to himself.	Self-Labelling Self-Disgust
144.	I feel like I have to be the same as my brothers and what they do. And follow sports like they do, or be mechanically minded like they are, and just be more of a man, so I'm more acceptable to them.	If he's not the same as his brothers, he will remain unacceptable in their eyes. Feels he should project a more "manly" persona. Wounded inner child will do anything to matter.	Need to Fulfil Masculine Role Expectations Need for Male Acceptance Sibling Rivalry.
145.	I feel like I'm half male and half female - androgenous or something.	Describes himself as "androgenous" - half male, half female.	Split Self Inner Conflict.
146.	I'm really in touch with my feminine side and I think my family's always been aware of that. I was teased about being a homo when I was little.	Recognizes his connection to his feminine side (anima). Senses family's awareness of him as "different." Being different means you are teased.	Inner Self as Feminine Shame Rejection by Peers
147.	I played with boys that weren't as manly as the guys that played hockey. I was with the creative bunch. The book readers. I was into dolls and puppets and stuff. Now I'm into theatre. It's all the same.	Was not part of the "macho" group in childhood. Was attracted to other boys who were like him - creative, less sports minded. This side has remained.	Outcast "The Sensitive One" Early Effeminacy
148.	Part of me has stayed the same. Although I tried to reject it when I was 13.	His feminine side remains. He recalls a period when he actively tried to reject that side.	Rejection of Disavowed Homosexual Side

149.	I rebelled and was very anti-child. I tried to be grown up fast and tried to be cool really fast. Because I wasn't a normal boy.	To compensate, he tried to hurry into adulthood; tried to impress his peers by being "cool" because he sensed he wasn't a "normal boy."	Coping Mechanism
150.	My parents just though I was a "sensitive" child. Hah, hah! Isn't that a hoot?	Sees parents' interpretation of him as a "sensitive" child as naive and laughable.	"The Sensitive One"
151.	But I like that part of myself. I think that's why people like me. Because I'm understanding and can reach people's HEARTS (emphasis) - I can understand what's going on in their hearts.	Now, he affirms the sensitive (feminine) side. Interprets his sensitivity as strength and shows a capacity for compassion.	Ambivalent Feelings re Homosexual Side Self-Acceptance
152.	I remember getting drunk, going home and my evil twin would yell at that sensitive child, and say "I hate you, I hate you. I'd like to smash you!" "You wimp!" I'd call myself a wimp.	Deep inner struggle between self-rejection and self-acceptance. Hatred of "the sensitive child." (Contradicts earlier affirmation of his sensitivity. Self-denigrating comments. Urges to obliterate the "weak" self.	Rage at Homosexual Side. Yo-Yo Syndrome Urge to Obliterate "Weak Self"
153.	The evil twin would practice punching. I never punched anyone in my life, but I practised. How I would fight!	Adopts a macho persona who would practice defending himself. Idealized strong male who can physically fight.	Coping Strategy.
154.	The evil twin wanted to kill that part. That part was <u>not</u> <u>me</u>. That part had no place in my life. That little shit. That pansy-assed boy. Just a little jerk - a little wimp, a little fairy, just like a little girl - Not worth anything!	Again, wants his strong side to murder the weak side. Enormous inner struggle, pain, despair.	Intense Inner Conflict Rage over Split Self Self-Denigration.
155.	Worthless - I just hated that kid. Hated him with a passion.	The inner sensitive child is "hated with a passion." The strong adult who wishes to be a strong male, sees the weak child as worthless.	Urge to Obliterate Homosexual Side.

156.	I still feel really stupid sometimes. When I'm with older people I feel young and immature.	Has not resolved this yet. Revers to childhood insecurity when he's with older individuals.	Self Doubt/Self Denigration.
157.	Yet sometimes there's parts of me that are very mature - I make mature decisions and think maturely. But I feel really unknowledgeable about the world and that bothers me sometimes.	Again, inner ambivalence towards self. Feels both mature and yet immature, knowledgeable, yet lacking in knowledge.	Contradiction Confusion over Self-Worth
158.	I have to know all this stuff, because I'm so stupid.	- Rationalizes that if he "knows things" he won't feel "so stupid."	Self-Denigration
159.	Like I don't think I'll commit suicide and I honestly don't think that if I don't have a family it will be the end of the world. I think people will love me.	The dilemma will not drive him to suicide. Senses he may survive the loss of not having his own family. Believes he will still be loved for who he is.	Hope for Resolution of Inner Conflict Self-Acceptance
160.	But what I have realized talking to you is how much I still have to accept. I just have to start accepting. Some things can change.	Realizes that he is in the midst of a process of self-acceptance that is far from complete. Ends on a note of hope that he can start accepting and that change <u>is</u> possible.	Need for Self-Acceptance Coming out as Process Hope

Table 6

Thematic Clusters of David's Experience

1. Struggle for Identity
   (35, 36, 63, 87, 90, 91, 92, 93, 94, 95, 105, 126, 132, 133, 140, 141, 148, 153, 159, 161, 165, 166)
3. Homosexual Passion
   (67, 68, 69, 70, 71, 72, 73, 75, 78, 79, 80, 81, 82, 111, 112, 113, 114, 115, 119, 135)
3. Coming Out to Oneself
   (87, 88, 89, 93, 95, 123, 124, 126, 150, 164, 166)
4. Ambivalence/Inner Conflict
   (118, 119, 121, 132, 133, 134, 136, 137, 141, 142, 144, 147, 153, 154, 156, 159)
5. Self Denigration
   (52, 53, 142, 144, 145, 154, 156, 157, 158, 160, 162)
6. Bisexual Option
   (15, 56, 89, 90, 95, 101, 109, 110, 126, 131)
7. Emotional Attraction Towards Women
   (60, 65, 66, 96, 108, 114, 125, 127, 128)
8. Heterosexual Experiences
   (59, 60, 62, 63, 65, 66, 109, 110, 113, 116, 129)
9. Perfectionism
   (35, 62, 98, 99, 103, 106, 129, 137, 141)
10. Identification with Mother
    (11, 13, 17, 21, 22, 24, 27, 38, 39, 46)
11. Sexual Repression / Shame
    (44, 45, 47, 49, 54, 55, 150)

12. Yo-Yo Syndrome
    (93, 94, 95, 99, 102, 107, 127, 131)
13. Idealized Woman
    (65, 66, 93, 99, 127, 128, 129, 130)
14. Need for Approval
    (33, 36, 57, 101, 134, 143)
15. Shame / Secrecy
    (15, 16, 73, 83, 100, 120, 122, 148)
16. Childhood Effeminacy
    (30, 31, 32, 34, 36, 148, 149, 152)
17. Homosexuality as Ego Alien
    (47, 93, 105, 106, 117, 156, 157)
18. Female Intimacy Dysfunction
    (58, 60, 61, 67, 68, 102, 113, 116)
19. Cathexis of Ideal Male
    (74, 80, 86, 118)
20. Heterosexual Fantasies
    (38, 41, 42, 126, 128)
21. Coping Strategies
    (3, 4, 10, 151, 155)
22. Distant Father
    (23, 25, 26, 51)
23. Weak Father
    (18, 19, 29, 43)
24. Pain of Renunciation
    (96, 97, 165, 166)
25. Hope
    (161, 164, 165, 166)

26. Coming Out to Others
    (81, 84, 85, 91)
27. Mother as Strong
    (12, 14, 18, 19)
28. Homosexual Fantasies
    (77, 118)
29. Idealized Early Childhood
    (1, 2)
30. Prehomosexual Awakening
    (48, 76)
31. Rationalization
    (35)
32. Emotional Isolation
    (16)

Overall Synthesis of David's Experience

David speaks idealistically about his early childhood, remembering himself as popular and independent as a small child (1,2). These early carefree memories are replaced by more painful schoolage ones in which he remembers being physically uncoordinated compared to his male peers (28). He avoided aggression (29,30,32), even though there was a part of himself that longed to get into a physical fight "just to prove to people that I was a man, that I could defend myself and that I probably was OK" (21). He learns to swallow his rage and to suppress the impulse to fight back by rationalizing that violence is wrong, that "it doesn't solve anything" (33), stating that he has now made "a conscious decision to be a peacemaker" (33).

Later in the interview, however, David reveals that he still struggles with intensely ambivalent feelings about what he labels as his "feminine side" (147). "I feel like I'm half male and half female - androgenous or something" (146). "I feel people are always judging me. I feel like a pansy ass" (144). He is agonizingly torn between accepting and even liking the sensitive, caring, feminine side of himself (152), and yet violently rejects it. He metaphorically refers to this self-rejecting side of himself as "the evil twin" which makes him feel "sick inside" (140). This "evil twin" represents a rigidly perfectionistic, judgmental, and violent side of his own psyche that continues to torment him and to fuel his periodic depressions (153,154,155,156). "The evil twin wanted to kill that part (the feminine side). He

describes his situation thus: "That part was not me! That part had no place in my life. That little shit. That pansy-assed boy. Just a little jerk - a little wimp, a little fairy, just like a little girl. Not worth anything!" (155) He continues: "Worthless! I just hated that kid. Hated him with a passion!" (156). These tortured statements embody the essence of the anguish David still suffers as he struggles to accept the competing forces within himself. In order to compensate for his lack of self-esteem, David sets unrealistically perfectionistic standards for himself in both his work and in his personal relationships (35,62,97,98,103,106,129,137,141).

Another way David tries to compensate for his feelings of masculine inadequacy is to adopt the role of the "family comedian" (3). Feeling excluded from the world of males by both his father and brothers, David tries to model himself after his older brother whom he idolizes, and forces himself to "follow sports like they do, or be mechanically minded like they are, and just be more of a man, so I'm more acceptable to them" (145). He learns to feign interest in stereotypically "masculine" pursuits in order to feel accepted by his father and brothers, yet in referring to his childhood he says: "I played with the creative bunch. The book readers. I was into dolls and puppets and stuff. Now I'm into theatre. It's all the same" (148).

David's sexual history echoes further inner unresolved conflicts. Initially he recalls being sexually attracted to girls and refers to numerous heterosexual fantasies

(38,39,40,126,128), which, although they do not have the same intensity as his homosexual fantasies, continue to exist. As a teenager, he had several sexual experiences with girls. Some of these were quite satisfactory, (58,59,63,64) while others were not (65,112).

A recurrent theme in David's interview is his perception of homosexual attraction as particularly intense and passionate (67,68,69,70,71,72,73,79,80,111,113). He recalls that his first homosexual love didn't "feel sexual at first" but was experienced more as an intellectual attraction (73). He understood his affection in terms of a powerful attraction to the dynamic and passionate qualities he saw in this man - qualities he admired and wanted for himself. David seems to have an urge to "cathect" certain male attributes by engaging in homosexual love relationships: (Eg., "Kissing Al was like kissing myself ... It was the nicest kiss I ever had" (78); kissing another male was like "kissing that man side of me. And it didn't mean I felt gay, I just felt more of a man ... like I had connected with a side of me" (84,85).

David maintains there is more role versatility for him in homosexual sex. With women, if they were sexually dominant, he felt "less of a man" (109), whereas with men he says that: "I could play the submissive role ... and it would be a turn on" (109). He adds: "Either way, it's a turn on with men" (111). It would seem that David finds the entire spectrum of attraction, sensuality and romantic love to be more powerful with men than with women: "Sex has always been more emotional with men. Al was my lover. The women were my girlfriends

(partners), but Al was my lover" (113).

In spite of his passion for men, David is far from reconciling his attraction for men with his negative image of the stereotypical gay lifestyle : "It makes me want to puke when I think about going to the bar and picking some guy up just for sex" (116). As stated earlier, David remains deeply ambivalent about his own homosexual side, and alternates between thinking of himself as heterosexual, bisexual and homosexual (89,92,93,94), in order to cope with the confusion he's experiencing. He's aware of his sexual attraction for both men and women (94). He states that he is finding it all "still so confusing, because I want a family" (95). Renunciation of the possibility of one day having a wife and children is difficult and something he is not yet ready to face (96).

One moment David wonders whether he's "being bisexual to please my parents" (100). Next he speculates that: "even this homosexual thing may be just an escape from having to deal with a relationship with a woman, just because I haven't had very good sexual experiences and stuff" (101). He escapes into fantasy about "the perfect woman" - an idealized mate who will rescue him from his dilemma: "God's already got her picked out. She's out there, I just haven't met her yet" (98). David alternates from one position to its direct opposite from one interview statement to the next. Just as he finishes stating that "I feel more and more comfortable with the fact I'm gay" (123), affirming that he feels much more homosexual now than heterosexual (125), he

then acknowledges, in the very next statement, that "I'm still attracted to women. I'm head over heels in love with Mary, still. Madly in love with her" (126); " I'm attracted to who she is as a person - I think sexually too. I've fantasized about us making love. Notice I say 'making love' because I don't think I'd 'have sex' with Mary" (129). "Yo-Yo-ing" again, in the next statement, he's back again to admitting, however, that "... even if I got her, I think I would still be attracted to men. I mean, that wouldn't stop" (130). It could be that David is experiencing deep fear about finally admitting his homosexuality to himself as any kind of definitive identity, and that this vacillating back and forth is a way for him to deal with the anxiety of the process of coming out to himself - a process that is clearly still unresolved.

In terms of his relationships with his parents, David seems to identify strongly with his mother, describing his personality as much more similar to hers than to his father's (11,13,17,21,22,24,27,38,39,46). As a child, he experienced his father as distant and somewhat weak (18,19, 23,25,26,29,43,51), while he experienced his mother as being the stronger, more dependable and controlling parent (12,14,18,19,52,53). However, as an adult, he is aware of an improved relationship with his father, and feels that his father would be the more supportive and understanding of his parents if he were to share his "homosexual secret" - something he has not yet found the courage to do (17,20,22,28,50,51). David suspects his own father has

latent homosexual urges which he has suppressed (45,46). Sexuality seems to be a taboo topic in his family, surrounded by mystery, shame, and mixed messages (44,45,47,49,54,55,150): "I see my parents as a very strange sexual match. I can't even imagine a tingle going through their bodies, even in my wildest imagination" (47).

Towards the end of the interview, David seems more hopeful of an eventual resolution to his dilemma: "I don't think that I'll commit suicide and I honestly don't think that if I don't have a family it will be the end of the world. I think people will still love me" (160). He also adds that "... I realize how much I still have to accept. I just have to start accepting" (161).

Peter

Personal Information

Peter is a 31-year old chartered accountant who is married and the father of an infant son. He had referred himself for counselling related to sexual orientation issues which he maintained were reaching a "crisis" point in his life. Over the past two years, Peter had increasingly engaged in unprotected, anonymous homosexual encounters, for which he had received testing for HIV and other sexually transmitted diseases. When he entered therapy with me, he appeared desperate to find a way to curtail these activities, so much so that at times he talked of suicide as his only option.

Table 7

First Order Thematic Abstraction of Peter's Experience

	Excerpts from Transcribed Interviews	Paraphrases	Themes
1.	I had my first homosexual encounter less than two years ago - in July, 1990. I'm 31 years old now - married with an infant son.	Peter, 31 years old and married with a child, experienced his first homosexual encounter when he was 29.	The urge is now a reality.
2.	I'm feeling so anxious. Because I want it all to stop.	High anxiety over homosexual urges; wishes "it all" to stop.	Anxiety. Objectification of Homosexual Impulse. ("It.")
3.	I want to go back two years to where I was, where I was dealing with it fine - I dealt with it fine up until that time.	Longing to return to an earlier state where "it" was not such a problem. Objectifies "it" - i.e. the impulse and puts it outside himself.	Fantasy regression. Objectification of impulse.
4.	These feelings of homosexuality. Fantasizing about sex with other males ... I accidentally discovered that there were ads in the paper for escort services, ads from guys to other guys. I don't think I ever realized that that existed before.	He "accidentally" discovers ads in the paper for male escort services and homosexual personals ads. Discovers the existence of this other world.	Homosexual Fantasies.
5.	Then I heard about the drag area in downtown Edmonton and I started exploring this area. More for curiosity's sake than anything. I just went there basically to see what was there.	Curiosity leads him to start exploring the drag area of the city. Started by driving by to see <u>what</u> (not "who") was there.	Objectification of Homosexual Impulses.
6.	It started deteriorating from then on. I've had 5 or 6 contacts now, all with male prostitutes.	Again, refers to "it" (i.e. the homosexual impulse). "It" is expressed through contact with male prostitutes. "It"is a process of deterioration.	Objectification of Homosexual impulse. Impulse as the controller. Acting on impulse = "deterioration."

7.	I had anal sex with one guy. He was wearing a condom and it broke. That's when I fell apart. I told my wife about it.	Danger in fulfilling his sexual impulse pushes him over the edge and he confesses to his wife after the fear and strain become unbearable. He thought he had contracted HIV.	Risk, danger Fear Remorse, Confession
8.	We never have had sex after I had anal sex with this guy. I'm concerned for her safety.	Avoids sex with his wife for fear of exposing her to danger.	Fear.
9.	I'm so tired of it.	Feels exhausted by the struggle over this.	Objectification of impulse. Anxiety, exhaustion.
10.	I know what has to be done. I'm fine for a while and can go a month - The urge may be there, but it's CONTROL ... CONTROL ... CONTROL. And then it just becomes almost overwhelming - the urge to go and have sex.	Feels he knows how to get this impulse under control. Most of the time he can exercise control over "it," except when it becomes too overwhelming and the urge is acted upon.	Sexual addiction is out of control. Need for Control.
11.	In all these encounters I've never had an orgasm. It's not because the other guy was not willing to reciprocate, it's because I never needed it. It was more my need to perform oral sex or to make love to another guy.	Awareness that the goal of his encounters is not achieving orgasm with a male, but his need is to perform oral sex, to "make love to" another man.	Orgasm is not the goal. Need to satisfy Males.
12.	This urge feels primordial - something similar to instinctive - that I want to go and satisfy another male.	Feels this to be an instinctive urge ("primordial") on his part. (Biologically ordained?)	Homosexual Urge as Instinctive. Need to Satisfy Males.
13.	I fantasize about somebody young, good looking, really well built, really well hung. I'm getting graphic! (nervous laughter)	Describes physical attributes of males he finds attractive.	Homosexual Fantasy. Idolization of Ideal Masculinity.
14.	Somebody that I feel would be my idea of physical perfection. He would possess certain physical qualities that I would like to have myself.	Ideal male physique is something he fantasizes about having himself.	Search for Physical Male. Perfection. Cathexis of Ideal Male.

15.	Then I want to become their sex slave. I want to satisfy them to the point where they'll get down on their knees and beg me to be with them.	Fantasy of passive role in sex - and of dominating these ideal male figures by the power of his sexual skill. They will "beg" him to stay.	Sexual Masochism Fantasies Need for Power and Control.
16.	When I'm out looking, I'm pretty selective.	Cruising is like "shopping."	Selectivity Primacy of the physical
17.	This urge has got to be psychological because it will build for a few days to the point what I call unbearable and then I give in.	The "urge" is described as psychological in origin which builds to a point of unbearable tension. He then surrenders to "it."	Primacy of the Impulse Sexual Addiction Cycle
18.	It builds and builds and builds, and then I fall apart by giving in.	"<u>It</u>" builds to a certain point, and "<u>I</u>" fall apart (when he surrenders to the urge). He feels caught in an addictive cycle.	Sexual Urge as Controlling Powerlessness over addiction. Objectification of Impulse.
19.	After, I feel a rush of guilt and stupidity (what are you trying to <u>do</u> to yourself?) And then I feel total suicidal tendencies.	Afterwards, he feels great remorse and guilt. Is aware of the danger and the "stupidity" - Then contemplates suicide.	Cycle of Sexual Addiction. Guilt, Grief, Remorse.
20.	At the same time I feel released from the burden, at least temporarily.	Paradoxically, however, he also feels "released from the burden" - Craving is momentarily satisfied.	End of Addictive Cycle.
21.	I have to figure out how to deal with the urge, to put it at bay or eliminate it. I don't know if I <u>can</u> eliminate it, but if only I could run out of the office, go home and hide under the bed!	It's as if he views the urge as an enemy to be eliminated - An outside force which invades his Self. Wishes to destroy "it," escape from "it" et cetera.	Power of Sexual Addiction. Objectification of the Impulse Urge to Destroy the Impulse.
22.	I'm so afraid. I don't want to go out and act. I want it to pass, to leave me alone.	Is deeply afraid of the power this urge holds over him. Hopes the demon will go away.	Fear of Powerlessness Objectification of Urge.
23.	What causes the urge? My wife and I haven't had sex for so long - I mean everybody needs to have it.	Speculates on the cause. Wonders if this is a result of abstinence from sex with his wife. Sex is something "everyone needs."	Search for Understanding Rationalization of Sexual Addiction.

24.	Maybe I should channel the urge and go and have sex with Mary, if I could, but I'm just so scared I'm infected (with HIV).	Would like to take control over the urge by having sex only with his wife, yet is afraid he may be carrying the HIV virus.	Need for Control Denial of Homosexuality Rationalization Heterosexual Option Fear.
25.	I used to have sexual fantasies about her, but now I hardly do at all.	Admits to having almost no sexual fantasies towards his wife any longer.	Male Sexual Fantasies
26.	I used to fantasize mostly about guys, but Mary was a part of it.	In spite of the fact his fantasies were mostly about males, his wife used to be a part of those fantasies.	Bisexual Fantasies
27.	She's gained weight and she isn't as physically attractive as she was to me before. It's mostly since her last pregnancy that she gained a lot of weight. She's still very pretty.	Doesn't find his wife as physically/sexually attractive as he used to due to her weight gain during pregnancy.	Awareness of lack of Sexual Attraction towards his wife.
28.	She lost the first baby, and then with the second she had to be on bedrest for months.	Their first baby died, and with the second she had to be very careful.	Fear of Hurting Women. Guilt. Rationalization of Impulse.
29.	With the first baby, she never told me anything that was going on. That really upset me. That really made me mad. She said she didn't want me to worry.	Experiences his wife of distancing herself emotionally from him after the baby died.	Rejection Lack of Intimacy with wife.
30.	It hurt us both a lot to lose that child.	Recognizes their grief from this loss.	Grief.
31.	As a kid I was always getting beat up. I got picked on quite a bit. I was weak and not much of an athlete.	Memories of physical and emotional abuse from classmates for being "weak" and unathletic.	Childhood Effeminacy. Peer Rejection Social Outcast
32.	I suffered at the hands of the other kids - there was a lot of name calling. Wimp, weakling, Fifi-stuff related to having feminine qualities.	Recalls the suffering he experienced over the name-calling by peers who perceived him as appearing too feminine.	Labelling Emotional Pain Shame

33.	Grade 6 to Grade 11 was just a blur for me. Getting picked on all the time. I don't know if I've blocked it or what.	Handles this trauma by repressing and suppressing his pain. School years are blocked out from clear memory while feelings of shame, pain remain.	Abuse from Peers. Repression of Pain
34.	All my friends talk about those years, and I don't remember anything.	Is aware in this respect he is different from others. Represses painful memories.	Repression of Painful Memories.
35.	Home though, was like a haven in most respects, except for my Dad. I could never do anything right for the guy.	Home was a safe place, except for his father whom he could never please.	Rejection by Father Home as a Haven
36.	I could never please him no matter what. The guy had no patience. Mary's dad is so different. He's got an enormous amount of patience.	Father is impossible to please. Father was impatient with him and rejecting.	Rejection by Father.
37.	My dad was ornery. He hated his job. My mom and dad were having troubles when I was at school. Things were pretty rocky with them, but they never elaborated.	Father was a bad-tempered man who hated his job and there was marital trouble at home. Tension in home was palpable, but kept a secret.	Dysfunctional Family. Family Secrecy.
38.	I'd give my dad the shirt off my back, but he never comes to visit at our house, he can never stay, he always has to get going, et cetera.	Still longs for a relationship with his father, but father remains distant and unavailable.	Abandonment by Father. Longing for Father.
39.	He never said anything, but he never indicated that he was proud of me when I was a young boy.	Senses father's disappointment in him as a son.	Longing for Father's Approval
40.	Yet my friends would come over and he'd treat them like kings. I was amazed, because it was as if he was a totally different guy with them.	Remembers father accepting his friends, bonding with them and treating them so much better than him.	Rejection by Father. Confusion over Father's Acceptance of Others.
41.	My dad was prouder of my younger brother, except he stole a van, got into drug dealing and so on, but they were more close than dad and myself.	Younger brother is "Dad's Boy" while older son feels rejected.	The Outcast Rejection by Father. Sibling Rivalry. Heterosexual Male Bonding?

42.	I'm closer to my mother. Dad used to be an asshole to my mom. I used to think "What kind of jerk <u>are</u> you?"	Identifies more closely with his mother. Takes on role of Mom's defender again the father. Feels his father was a bully, a "jerk."	Identification with Mother. Anger towards Father. Mother's Defender.
43.	I had my first fantasies about males in my early teens. I had always admired a good physique, a good body on a guy, but I can't say I wanted to jump in the sack with him at that time.	Recalls earliest homosexual fantasies were in early teens. Was unaware at that time what his attraction towards males signified. His fantasies were primarily about ideal male physiques.	Prehomosexual Awakening Homosexual Fantasies.
44.	I used to fantasize I was a guy having sex with a woman.	He also recalls fantasizing about sex with females in his teens.	Heterosexual Fantasies.
45.	And then at around age 19, things started going the other way.	Then fantasies became primarily homosexual at age 19.	Change in Love Object? Homosexual Fantasies.
46.	In Grade 12, my best friend's girl had a crush on me, and that made me feel I was to be treated with more respect.	Experiences a much-needed boost in self-esteem when his friend's girlfriend was attracted to him.	Need for Peer Acceptance Longing for "Normality"
47.	Then all my friends went off to university. I didn't go, and I didn't know what I wanted to do with my life then. That's when the fantasies started getting stronger.	Lost youth who feels unclear about his life's path. Sense of isolation increases and homosexual fantasies get stronger.	Alienation, isolation. Homosexual Fantasies Sexual Fantasies as Escape from Emotional Pain.
48.	Maybe I started feeling that as a male I wasn't physically up to my standard.	Compares himself to other males his age and feels he doesn't measure up to his own high standard of male beauty.	Lack of Self-Esteem Idolization of Ideal Masculinity
49.	When I was 18, I met Mary for the first time. She was 16 years old. I dated a bit. I'd go to university functions, toga parties and stuff. I dated a few girls at that time.	Met his wife at age 18. Remembers dating a few girls at that time.	Need for Peer Acceptance Struggle for "Normality"
50.	After I dated Mary for a few months, I made sexual advances to her.	First sexual advances toward Mary were made after a few months of dating her.	Heterosexual Experience

51.	Then she told me she'd been raped by a farmhand when she was 12 years old. It was difficult for her to have intercourse with anybody.	Her past experiences caused her to reject him sexually at first.	Women as Vulnerable Empathy towards Women.
52.	I was disappointed, but I said it was fine. When I was 20, we finally did have sex - two years later.	In spite of his disappointment, he accepts this. Two years later, they consummate their relationship.	Heterosexual Experience
53.	And I couldn't complain. I enjoyed it and she really seemed to enjoy it.	Earliest sexual experiences with her were enjoyable, but notes from his point of view "he couldn't complain."	Enjoyable Heterosexual Sex
54.	At that time, I became obsessed with getting my body in shape. I wanted to get on the university swim team.	Recalls obsession about becoming the idealized male.	Obsession with Ideal Body Image
55.	I'd met a guy who was on the swim team a year earlier. This guy was pretty incredible. Really good looking. Incredible body. Amazing strength. I really fantasized sexually about this guy.	Remembers meeting another male who fulfils this idealized male fantasy. (The language he uses suggests a powerful erotic attraction.)	Idealization of Ideal Masculinity. Hero Worship Homosexual Fantasies.
56.	It affected me fiercely. The impact of the guy. I used to eat, sleep, and drink this guy. I was obsessed. I wanted to be like him so much. I wanted to be his friend so much.	Effect of this attraction is "fierce." P. describes the obsessive nature of the attraction. Wants both to imitate him and become his friend.	Passion of Homosexuality Obsession Cathexis of Ideal Male.
57.	I wanted to <u>be</u> him.	Cathexis of the desired object - Wish to actually <u>be</u> the other person.	Identification. Cathexis of Love Object.
58.	He was my idol. I wanted to imitate him.	Wishes to imitate his idol.	Hero Worship.
59.	At that time I was almost engaged to Mary, but I told her I wanted to break it off.	Considers breaking his engagement to Mary.	Homosexual Awakening. Guilt. Necessity of Relinquishment.

60.	This guy was free and unattached. I got cold feet, but I still didn't break it off with Mary.	In spite of his strong attraction to his male idol, he is too fearful to break off his engagement.	Fear of Coming Out to Oneself. Keeping Options Open.
61.	It's been really good with Mary. Everyone used to tell us "Gosh you two are compatible, gee you have a lot of fun together, gosh you've done a lot, et cetera."	Rationalizes that he really does have a very good relationship with Mary. Notes that other people approve of them as a couple.	Need for Social Approval. Refuge in "Normality."
62.	The sex was good. I never complained. I was always satisfied. I think she was too.	Again sex was satisfactory. (Note how different language is here to describe sex versus earlier description of erotic attraction toward males).	Heterosexual Sex as Lacking Passion. Bisexual Option.
63.	After our son was stillborn, I rented some videos. I rented a gay video too. When Mary worked nights I used to rent the gay videos.	Starts engaging in "secret" watching of gay pornographic videos when wife is absent.	Grief. Inner v. Outer Identity Secrecy.
64.	Even in the heterosexual videos, my full focus was always on the guy.	Awareness of the fact his full focus is on the males even in the heterosexual videos.	Primacy of Homosexual Fantasy
65.	The gay videos were more exciting. To see two average guys get it on was never a big deal, but two good looking guys, well-endowed with great bodies. That's basically the gist of the turn on.	Prefers gay videos to heterosexual videos. The essence of his erotic attraction is seeing idealized male figures.	Passion Excitement Idolization of Ideal Masculinity
66.	The physical superiority of a guy - that excites me, thrills me.	Male physical perfection "thrills" him.	Primacy of Physical Male Perfection.
67.	It's purely physical. I don't care who he is, what he does, I don't care if he's smart or stupid - It's purely physical.	Awareness of this attraction being "purely physical."	Primacy of the Physical
68.	I can't ever imagine being in a gay relationship. Going home to another guy. I don't see it as being right.	Cannot envision "ever" actually having a guy relationship. Sees this as morally wrong.	Homosexuality as Deviant Rejection of Homosexual Lifestyle.

69.	I want to live with my wife and family, but I want sex with beautiful male bodies. Mary is my best friend. I love my son. It's not a facade - I'm with them because I like being with them.	Right now, he "has both" - a wife and child he loves, and the chance to have sex with "beautiful male bodies." Objectifies male sexual partners/personalizes his family.	Pain of Renunciation Approach - Approach Conflict Bisexual Option.
70.	I love them very much.	Awareness of his genuine love for his family.	Love for Family
71.	I wonder why, if I'm so obsessed with having a good body, why don't I just go to the gym and work out? You can upgrade yourself to whatever you want to be. But there isn't enough time to go to the gym.	Wonders why he doesn't become his own fantasized male ideal by going to a gym. Feels the ideal male is within his grasp if he were willing to commit to a regimen.	Obsession with Physical. Search for Understanding.
72.	If I go and pick up a guy and have sex with him, it's releasing me from wanting to be a certain perfect standard, and I'm free from it for a while.	It's easier to pick up a male, "have him" sexually, and thereby release himself from his own standard of wanting male perfection.	Cathexis of the Idealized Male. Addictive Cycle.
73.	I can't be this perfect body myself, I'll go rent one and I'll have control over them when I pay them. Then they're mine as such.	If he cannot <u>be</u> this ideal male, he can go and purchase one that he can have complete control over at least temporarily.	Need for Control Cathexis. Objectification of Male Lovers.
74.	I know I place a lot of emphasis on appearance. I know that for a fact.	Recognizes his obsession with physical appearance.	Obsession with Physical
75.	During the act I feel good. On the way downtown my mouth is dry - I feel excited. Anticipation. My heart is racing. I mean I'm in a full adrenalin rush.	Describes ritual of addictive cycle - starts with excitement, anticipation. Is aware of bodily sensations related to a "full adrenalin rush."	Ritual of Addictive Cycle Passion Loss of Control
76.	Everything else becomes irrelevant. The whole focus is on the upcoming act. What I'm going to do when I get there.	Focus narrows as obsession begins to be acted upon. All other thoughts are blocked out.	Primacy of Homosexual Impulse Id in Control
77.	At this point, my whole brain is on sex - nothing else matters. It feels exciting, dangerous.	His mind is completely engrossed with thoughts of sex. Obsessive thoughts add to the state of arousal.	Excitement Danger Obsession

78.	But then I think - "this is crazy. This is crazy! I can't do this here!"	Momentary thoughts intervene (Superego) of not proceeding to act on the impulse.	Guilt Super Ego
79.	But I'm ready to go. The whole focus becomes that. Everything else is just totally blacked out.	However, this increases excitement and arousal and all other competing thoughts become "blacked out."	Id in Control Addictive Peak
80.	After I feel very upset. Ashamed. Guilty. I think I must be crazy. Am I suicidal or what?	Post cycle despair. Feelings of hopelessness over his behaviour and his sense of powerlessness pushes him into thoughts of suicide.	Shame Guilt Remorse Suicidal Ideation.
81.	I drive home crying. I get home. I wipe my eyes, go to the house, kiss Mary and the baby. Then I lay awake in bed all night wondering if the guy was HIV positive. What have I done? Here I go again.	Remorse and guilt follows him home where he tries to "make amends." The emotional pain he feels at the end of the cycle sets the stage for the next cycle to begin. Fears of flirting with death. (HIV)	End of the Cycle Guilt Superego in Control
82.	I go to the bookstore to read a book which seems to say you can't get HIV from saliva. Reading that makes me feel less anxious.	Lowers anxiety by trying to get more information on HIV transmission. Temporarily this helps.	Rationalization Need for Reassurance.
83.	There has got to be a way for me to stop all this. Something is going to happen very soon. It can't go on.	Realizes his behaviour is out of control - that it cannot continue indefinitely without calamity happening.	Fear Powerlessness
84.	I think I can stop it. After I told Mary, I had one slip-up. You're allowed one. But then I did it again.	Yet, thinks he can control it. Confessing to wife helps initially but still he "slipped up" - and then "slipped up" again. ("Last time phenomenon")	Addictive Cycle Rationalization
85.	I guess I'm saying I can't stop this behaviour.	Admits that he is powerless with the addiction.	Powerlessness over Impulse
86.	What do I do? What do I do? It's going to destroy my marriage, my relationship with Mary and my son. I might give her AIDS.	Can't see a way out. Realizes he may lose "everything" if he continues to act on this impulse.	Acute Awareness of Potential Losses. Fear.

87.	I know what I'm doing is absolutely risky. But when the urge builds, nothing else matters. It's almost like it's a rationalization process.	Senses the very real risks he's engaging in, yet feels powerless to control the impulse once the cycle starts.	Danger Risk Primacy of Impulse Addictive Cycle
88.	Then I come and talk to you, because if you can determine the underlying causes for me, maybe you can deal with it and that will eliminate the behaviour.	Understands that some "underlying causes" are fuelling this behaviour. If therapy can help him identify these, he might be able to eliminate the urge.	Search for Understanding Exorcism of the "Demon"
89.	If I really <u>am</u> gay, I still have to eliminate the behaviour. I accept that maybe I am gay. I would say more so that I am.	Understands being gay and being sexually addicted are two different issues. Accepts that he probably <u>is</u> gay.	Coming out to Oneself Acceptance of Homosexuality.
90.	What does this mean to me for the rest of my life? It means that it's going to be sheer hell from now until the day I die. That may be soon.	Pain of this understanding and of inevitable choices is seen as his life remaining "sheer hell" forever. Suicide again is contemplated as a "way out."	Homosexuality as Curse Emotional Anguish
91.	I have to deal with it and have to learn I cannot have a gay relationship outside my marriage. I <u>have</u> to stop, but I can't. I'm in serious trouble.	Resolves to try to stamp out the gay side of himself. To preserve his married life and his integrity, Dr. Jekyll will have to kill Mr. Hyde.	"Yo-Yo" Syndrome Intrapsychic Conflict
92.	I need a plan. A plan of attack or a guide I can follow when the urge comes. I don't know if something like that exists, but I <u>have</u> to stop.	Wishes to declare war on the addiction. Needs a "battle plan." Wonders if a "guide" exists that will help him stop.	Exorcism of the "Demon." Desperation. Need for Control.
93.	I did suppress the homosexual side for 5 or 6 years, but then it builds to the point where it becomes unbearable. I'd like to be done with the whole thing. I've wasted a whole year and a half on this mess. I will have destroyed a year and a half of my life, and Mary's.	Suppressing his homosexual side for 5 years creates enormous pressure inside. Pressure that "must" be released. Wishes it could "go away." Since he's been acting on the impulse (1½ years), he has "wasted" his life and that of his wife.	Homosexual urge as Demonic, Uncontrollable Disavowed Self.

94.	I'm sure it's constantly on her mind. It must be hell for her.	Senses how difficult it must be for his wife to live with this awareness of his activities.	Empathy for Wife
95.	I know what I want. I want to stay with Mary and Tim. I want to stay inside that relationship.	Consciously, if he could "choose," he knows he would choose his wife and their relationship.	Longing for "Normality." Need for Emotional Intimacy.
96.	But on a scale of 1 - 10, I'd be leaning towards an 8 or 9 on the homosexual side.	Yet, his inner voice acknowledges that his "true self" has an almost completely homosexual identity.	Inner (true) Self. Coming out to Oneself. "Yo-Yo" Syndrome
97.	The energy that this crisis is burning with these emotions is killing me at my job, killing me at home. It's killing my quality time, my life.	Conscious of the energy that is consumed by his addiction. This addiction "kills."	Emotional Anguish. Crisis as Destroyer
98.	I am split inside. On one side there's Peter, happy to go home to see his wife and baby, and to socialize with other families.	Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde (Split self). Incongruity of leading a double life. Normal self is happy with wife and baby.	Split Self Longing for "Normality."
99.	On the other side, there's a guy who likes to work hard, then go for a reward after work to go and play around. To meet a guy and have a one-sided sexual encounter with him.	Addicted self feels he "deserves" to be rewarded for hard work, stress et cetera by acting out his homosexual impulses.	Disavowed Self Addicted Self Need to Satisfy Males.
100.	If I'm feeling stressed, my thoughts would turn to that. I've read that a lot of guys will seek out sex as a reward for hard work or to deal with stressful situations.	Realizes that acting out the impulse is related to work stress and that sexual encounters are the reward.	Sex as Reward Rationalization.
101.	Monday night, after I had my fix the night before, I was even thinking in terms of castration. To have myself castrated as a cure. After I perform the act, that's what I want to do. It would be a solution.	Awareness of anonymous homosexual sex and a "fix." Feels so desperate and powerless that he seriously considers castration as an option. Post addictive despair leads to thoughts of "fixing" the problem by self-mutilation.	Homosexual Sex as "Fix" Desperation Id vs. Superego Desperation.

102.	Last time I slipped up, Mary asked me if anything was wrong. I said "nothing, nothing." Maybe I'm a professional liar.	Senses his wife suspects, but keeps the truth from her.	Deception Avoidance of Truth.
103.	Maybe it would be best if I left her and Tim. I don't know. Who cares? I'm so tired. So tired of it.	Wonders if he should leave his wife and child. Emotionally exhausted by his struggle.	Exhaustion. Hopelessness.
104.	I know I can get out of it, it's just finding the escape door.	Still feels if he searches far enough, there is a way out of his dilemma - an "escape door." Feels he can overcome "it."	Yo-Yo Syndrome
105.	I know what I want. I want to stay with Mary and the baby. I don't know how to eliminate the other side.	Reiterates his desire to live a "normal" life with his wife and child. Doesn't yet know how "Dr. Jekyll" will eliminate "Mr. Hyde."	Inner vs. Outer Self Elimination of Homosexual Self.

Table 8

Thematic Clusters of Peter's Experience

1. Idolization of Ideal Masculinity
   (13, 14, 16, 48, 54, 56, 57, 58, 64, 65, 66, 71, 72)
2. Objectification of Homosexual Impulse
   (2, 3, 5, 6, 9, 10, 18, 21, 22, 84, 97, 101, 104, 105)
3. Cycle of Sexual Addiction
   (17, 18, 19, 20, 72, 75, 76, 77, 79, 81, 84, 100)
4. Sexual Addiction
   (17, 18, 19, 20, 72, 75, 76, 77, 79, 81, 84, 100)
5. Need for Control
   (2, 3, 10, 24, 72, 73, 83, 84, 88, 91, 104)
6. Anxiety / Fear / Danger
   (2, 7, 9, 22, 60, 81, 83, 85, 86, 87)
7. Rationalization
   (23, 24, 28, 29, 61, 82, 84, 100)
8. Homosexual Fantasies
   (4, 10, 15, 25, 43, 45, 47, 55, 64)
9. Shame / Secrecy
   (32, 40, 48, 63, 80, 93, 102)
10. Remorse / Guilt
    (19, 28, 78, 80, 93, 94, 101)
11. Split Self / Inner Conflict
    (93, 97, 98, 99, 103, 104, 105)
12. Heterosexual Experience
    (26, 44, 50, 52, 53, 62)

13. Rejection by Father
    (35, 36, 38, 39, 40, 41)
14. Homosexual Passion
    (56, 64, 65, 75, 77)
15. Search for Understanding
    (23, 71, 82, 88, 104)
16. Refuge in "Normality"
    (61, 69, 70, 81, 95)
17. Homosexuality as Ego Alien
    (68, 90, 91, 105)
18. Coming Out to Oneself
    (89, 90, 96, 97)
19. Grief
    (30, 32, 63, 97)
20. Urge to Sexually Satisfy Males
    (11, 12, 15, 99)
21. Pain of Renunciation
    (69, 86, 90)
22. Childhood Effeminacy
    (31, 32, 33)
23. Women as Vulnerable
    (28, 42, 51)
24. Hopelessness
    (97, 103)
25. Bisexual Option
    (60, 62)
26. Prehomosexual Awakening
    (43, 59)

27. Isolation
    (32, 47)
28. Longing for Father
    (38, 39)
29. Repression of Emotional Pain
    (33, 34)
30. Identification with Mother
    (42)
31. Lack of Heterosexual Desire
    (27)
32. Need for Acceptance
    (46, 49)

Overall Synthesis of Peter's Experience

Peter was in extreme emotional distress about sexual orientation issues at the time of this interview. As a child, he recalled being teased brutally by his male peers for being effeminate (31,32,33) and as a result, his school years are for him are largely a blur of repressed emotional pain (32,33,34). His relationship with his father has always been a source of grief for Peter, by whom he continues to feel abandoned and rejected (35,36,38,39,40,41). He feels that no matter what, he will never be able to measure up as a man in his father's eyes, as opposed to his younger brother who, in spite of becoming involved in criminal behavior, won the approval of his father (41). Peter still longs for a relationship with his father, and expresses pain over the fact his father bonded more readily with his young male friends than he did with Peter (40). He admits that he feels closer to his mother (42), and often took on the role of mother's defender against father (42).

Peter's homosexual fantasies started in his early teens, but at that time he states he was unaware of what his attraction towards males signified: "I had always admired a good physique, a good body on a guy, but I can't say I wanted to jump into the sack with him at that time" (43). He makes reference frequently in the interview to a history of homosexual fantasies (4,10,15,25,43,45,47,55,64) which, until the last two years, had remained solely as unrealized fantasies. At age 18, Peter acquired a girlfriend who was later to become his wife, and felt his self esteem

and sense of acceptance from his peers improve at last (46). Eventually, when he was twenty years old, they became sexually active, and he reports his heterosexual experience with his wife Mary as initially "enjoyable" (53). In spite of mentioning an awareness of occasional heterosexual fantasies, he admits that "even (in watching) heterosexual pornographic videos, my full focus was always on the guy" (64). Peter became engaged to Mary at age twenty, but remembers wanting to break it off because he became aware of an intense sexual attraction he had for another man (55,56,). However, he proceeded with his marriage plans, and fathered two sons, the first of whom died a crib death.

One of the most striking themes in Peter's data is the passion he seems to feel for what could be most aptly described as an "idolization of ideal masculinity" (13,14,16,48,54,56,57,58,64,65,66,71,72). Peter worships and obsessses over real and imaginary male symbols of physical perfection. Of one male he was passionately drawn to, he stated: "I really fantasized sexually about this guy. It affected me fiercely ... the impact of the guy. I used to eat sleep and drink this guy. I was obsessed. I wanted to be like him so much. I wanted to be his friend so much. I wanted to <u>be</u> him. He was my idol. I wanted to imitate him" (55,56,57,58). It is as if Peter has the urge to cathect the qualities of certain images of ideal male perfection, thereby somehow incorporating it into his own being. For example, in describing part of the motivation that impels him to pick up gay prostitutes he says: "I can't be this perfect body

myself. I'll go rent one and I'll have control over them when I pay them. Then they're mine as such" (73).

Another predominant theme in Peter's interview suggests a sexual addiction. Having suppressed his homosexual impulses for years, Peter started acting on these impulses for the first time at age 29, after the loss of his infant son. It is possible that this loss could have been the catalytic event that finally pushed him to the point where he started to act upon his fantasies by engaging in anonymous "commercial" homosexual encounters. Peter distances himself emotionally from these behaviours by objectifying his homosexual impulse, frequently referring to this side of himself as an "It" - a powerful demonic force over which he feels he has no control (2,3,5,6,9,10,18,21,22,84,97,101,104,105). Deeply split inside, it is as if he is the embodiment of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde. To preserve his outward social identity, his "normal" life as a married man and father, he feels in effect that Dr. Jekyll has to "kill" Mr. Hyde, and makes repeated references to the necessity of "eliminating" his homosexual side (2,3,21,84,88,89).

On the other hand, he admits that the homosexual urge feels "primordial - something similar to instinctive - that I want to go and satisfy another male" (12). Curiously, he does not seek physical sexual gratification for himself in these encounters (11), but rather derives the greatest satisfaction from performing sexual favours for other men, of becoming their "sex slaves" (15), in this way gaining a sense

of power over them. He is highly particular as to the physical attributes of his potential partners, taking great care to be "very selective" when making his choices (16).

The way Peter describes the whole process is reminiscent of the typical cycle that most sexually addicted people report: first, he describes a gradual awakening of desire, where he senses increasing pressures of homosexual fantasies which he struggles consciously to suppress (10). During this time, his mind becomes completely engrossed with thoughts of sex (13). This period of "CONTROL" can last for up to a month, after which "It" builds to the point where he experiences the urge as unbearable, and then he "gives in" (17). As he begins to act out on his impulses, a form of ritualization takes place and it is as if he enters an altered state of consciousness. Then, as he says: "Everything else becomes irrelevant. The whole focus is on the upcoming act ... At this point my whole brain is on sex - nothing else matters. It feels exciting, dangerous" (76,77). Fleeting thoughts of shame and guilt are ignored, and "everything else is just totally blacked out" (79). After the encounter is over, pain and despair complete the cycle and Peter is left with an such an overwhelming sense of helplessness and guilt that he actually feels that suicide or castration are his only options (80,101).

Peter's dilemma evokes a paricularly excruciating pain, for his potential losses are not that of an imagined wife and family, but of an actual wife and infant son that he dearly loves and stands to lose if his behaviour continues. Weary

of the struggle of living a double life surrounded by shame and secrecy, he feels caught in a situation for which he cannot find a solution, a dilemma that he says is "killing me at my job, killing me at home ... killing my quality time, my life" (97). If he were to "come out," to himself and others, he senses his losses would be devastating, both professionally and personally. Yet he admits that: "On a scale of 1 -10, I'd be leaning towards an 8 or 9 on the homosexual side" (96). If it truly were a matter of "choice," Peter has no doubt about what he would choose: "I know what I want. I want to stay with Mary and the baby." (95,105). While acknowledging his probable homosexual identity (89), Peter agonizes over what this acknowledgement would do to his life: "What does this mean to me for the rest of my life? It means that it's going to be sheer hell from now until the day I die. That may be soon" (90).

Overall Synthesis of Shared Experience

In this section, a consolidation, or synthesis of the phenomenon of sexual orientation crisis is presented. The purpose of this overall synthesis is for the researcher to immerse herself in a process of intuitive integrative reflection - a reflection which is based upon the individual thematic analyses and essential structures that were revealed in the idiosyncratic experiences of the four subjects. In seeking to capture this overall description, the researcher allows the situated aspects of the individual descriptions to recede in order to articulate the major themes, or the essential structural features of the phenomenon (Giorgi, 1975). The following major themes were identified in an across persons analysis shown in Table 9 and serve as a guide for the description that follows. These major themes are the result of a final clustering of themes from the individual thematic analyses shown in Tables 2, 4, 6, 8.

Table 9

Major Themes Abstracted From Individual Thematic Analyses

Major Themes	Individual Themes
1. Idealized Early Childhood	- Childhood Innocence
	- Regression
	- Longing for Peace
2. Childhood Effeminacy	- Labelling, Shaming by Peers
	- The "Outsider"
	- Avoidance of Aggression
	- Male Sibling Rivalry
	- The "Sensitive One"
	- Loneliness
3. Coping Mechanisms	- Assuming Roles
	- Objectification of Impulse
	- Withdrawal from World
	- Closeness to Mother
	- Reaction Formation
	- Rationalization
	- Suppression
	- Perfectionism/Control
	- Escape into Fantasy

4. Lost/Distant Father	- Rejection by Father
	- Dysfunctionality Father/Son
	- Son's Reactive Distancing
	- Seeking Lost Father in Homosexual Intimacy
	- Chronic Grief
5. Identification With Mother	- Surrogate Spouse
	- Females as Nurturers
	- Strong Vs Weak Mothers
	- Ambivalence Toward Mothers
	- Misogyny/Fear of Women
6. Ideal Masculine Idolizaton	- The "Marlboro Man"
	- Cathexis of Ideal Male
	- Homosexual Passion
	- Homoerotic Fantasies
	- Prehomosexual Awakening
	- Obsession with Physicality
	- Partner as Father Substitute
7. Bisexual Option	- Ideal Woman as Rescuer
	- Keeping Options Open
	- Longing for "Normality"
	- Heterosexual Fantasies
	- Holding Back From Final Admission
	- Avoidance of Pain of Renunciation

8. Struggle for Identity
- "Yo-Yo" Syndrome
- Intrapsychic Conflict
- Inner Vs Outer Self
- Homosexuality as Ego-Alien
- Sexual Addiction
- Negative Self-Labelling
- Shame/Secrecy
- Fear/Anxiety
- Guilt/Condemnation
- Coming Out to Self/Others
- Pain of Renunciation
- Hope Vs Despair
- Choiceless "Choice"
- Yearning for Resolution

1. Idealized Early Childhood

Three of the four subjects in this study made reference to an earlier time in their lives when they happier, more carefree and innocent. For them, fond memories of their early childhood years and an idealistic perception of themselves as loved and safe in their families were replaced by a frightening rupture in their lives which seemed to occur sometime during middle childhood. This rupture was brought about by either parental divorce (Sean), by a geographical move and the diagnosis of one father as schizoprenic (Richard), or by a more subtle gradual awareness of family dysfunction (David, Peter). I believe this in part set the stage for some of the identity struggles that were to follow and impacted upon the development of their personalities in distinct ways. For example, all subjects expressed a longing to go back to the innocence of their early childhood when they felt free from the painful identity struggle they were currently experiencing. As a small child, they had felt accepted for who they were and loved unconditionally. It was during middle childhood that this sense of wholeness began to feel theatened and fragmented and when the earliest signs of sexual orientation confusion began to manifest themselves. Later, this longing became expressed in a tendency to escape into idealistic fantasizing when they felt overwhelmed.

2. Childhood Effeminacy

By middle childhood, all subjects spoke of feeling "different" from their peers. They talked about being relentlessly teased and labelled with such hurtful and derogatory names as "pansy ass," "sissy," "weakling," etc. by schoolmates. Thus a toxic scenario begins to unfold. For a seven or eight year-old boy, this public shaming creates an understandable tendency to withdraw socially, and to avoid even more assiduously activities where he might experience further humiliation, such as competitive team sports and aggressive play.

Home is sometimes seen as a place where there is respite from the torment, usually found through the support and love from their mothers. If, however, they have brothers and a father with whom they feel a lack of acceptance or bonding, this acute sense of isolation is felt even at home, and there is no reprieve from their pain. Often they are labelled in their families, sometimes affectionately, as "the sensitive one" - a role which they later learn can have its compensations, especially in their ability to communicate first with their mothers, and later, with females in general.

By early adolescence, the deleterious effects of constant shaming begin to take their toll, particularly in terms of self esteem, as each boy struggles to find ways to cope and compensate for his battered and fragmented sense of self.

3. Coping Mechanisms

Richard rebelled and became "the class clown," deliberately trying to taunt his high school tormentors by wearing outlandish costumes to school. By courageously taking the "if you can't beat them, join them" attitude, he inadvertently discovered he has a flair for the dramatic which paradoxically turned his "weakness" into strength, earning him acceptance from at least some of his peers.

Sean, on the other hand, learned to feel comfortable with his designated role as the outsider. Rather than risk confronting his tormentors, he withdrew into a solitary kind of existence, preferring to spend much of his time alone, a preference that now marks his adult style of being-in-the-world.

Like Richard, David also assumed the role of the "clown," or comedian in order to feel accepted, developing a flair for drama which later became the source of his chosen career as a professional actor. Yet David recognized that this comedian role masked an underlying rage which was expressed in less adaptive ways. In effect, he decided to "join the enemy" by masochistically applying the derogatory labels to himself with a particular vengeance. David distanced himself from his own effeminate side, by adopting a self-condemning alter ego whom he referred to as his "evil twin." The evil twin's function was to persecute his own inner psyche more brutally than he would ever be likely to experience from his friends, thereby possibly strengthening his resilience to attacks from

the outside world.

Peter coped by successfully repressing the painful memories of his school years - years which he claimed he now remembered "nothing." Later on, his struggle to cope took the form of seeking solace from emotional pain by becoming drawn into the fantasy-laden, escapist world of the sexual addict. Each subject, then, seemed to develop unique and more or less adaptive ways of coping with the pain of their existence, which allowed them to survive their circumstances.

4. Lost/Distant Father

The theme of the lost and/or distant father emerged in all four interviews. Each subject expressed varing degrees of pain regarding his relationship with his father. For Richard and Sean, the grief centered around intense feelings of rejection and abandonment. Their solution was to emotionally divorce themselves from their fathers in order to cope with the emotional pain that surrounded this issue. Richard went so far as having to regard his father as "dead," (which he believed was an actual possibility), while Sean distanced himself by referring to his father as his "uncle." Sean expressed a deep longing to continue trying to establish a relationship with his father who nevertheless continued to appear disinterested in his son. The result was that both fathers and sons had distanced themselves from each other. For both Sean and Richard, this paternal loss remains an open wound that they attempt partially to heal through loving relationships with homosexual partners.

Peter felt he could never measure up in his father's eyes

to what "a man" should be - that no matter what he did, it would never be good enough for his father. When he noticed his father naturally bonded with his more "macho" younger brother and with some of Peter's own friends, he suffered profound feelings of grief and masculine inadequacy. In his encounters with male prostitutes, his satisfaction came from being in a position of power over them - of being admired for his skill as a lover, rather than trying to get physical sexual release. It is plausible that Peter is unconsciously trying to work out unresolved issues with his father during these encounters.

David's relationship to his father was dysfunctional and distant to the extent that he viewed his father as weak and rather pathetic, particularly in relation to his mother. He wondered whether his own father had repressed homosexual tendencies of his own, and predicted that his father would be the most understanding of his two parents should he ever have the courage to "come out" to them.

5. Identification with Mother

The subjects clearly and without exception tended to identify emotionally very closely with their mothers. This process started in early childhood when the subjects recalled feeling empathy for their mothers, particularly for the way they perceived their mothers being treated by their fathers. Consequently, they assumed the role of surrogate spouse, providing their mothers with the kind of emotional intimacy and support they needed.

Richard, Sean and David express deeply ambivalent

feelings about their role as surrogate spouse: On the one hand, they felt pleased with their supportive role and the intimacy they shared with their mothers; on the other hand, they resented this intimacy and felt overwhelmed by their mothers' demands. They tended to see their mothers as women who alternated unpredictably between admirable strength and excessive emotionality. Of the four subjects, Richard seemed most affected by this phenomenon. His descriptions of his mother's acknowlegement of having "emotionally incested" her son and of her tendency to criticize his girlfriends, resulted in Richard having an almost misogynistic fear of women's power to "deviously manipulate men."

6. Idolization of Ideal Masculinity

Most of the subjects remembered sensing early in their childhood a powerful attraction towards masculine figures. This subtle yet persistent attraction was not initially consciously sexual in nature. It was only later, usually in early adolescence, that they began to be aware of the erotic aspects of this attraction. For example, for Richard this attraction took the form of a childhood obsession with photographs of "Marlboro Man" advertisements. This image became an almost mythological embodiment of what he perceived even as a young boy as the ideal male figure - heroic, strong, and invincible. By the time he was twelve, he had eroticicized the photographs and fantasized about the Marlboro Man while masturbating.

The data contain other examples of what could be described as childhood "prehomosexual awakening." Sean

remembers being strongly attracted to male bodies at swimming pools as a child; David and Peter's homoerotic fantasies started somewhat later, in early adolescence. As with most sexual fantasies, their homosexual fantasies seem intently focused on distinct physical attributes of certain ideal male figures.

The data suggest there is a strong impulse in the subjects to "cathect" these idealized figures through physical homosexual encounters, thereby incorporating the desired attributes into themselves. David vividly captured this theme when he described that kissing his male lover was like kissing the masculine side of himself. This urge to cathect the fantasized ideal male was seen in all four protocols, but most notably so in Peter's.

All the subjects experienced their homosexual love relationships as more intense and passionate than their heterosexual relationships. Their accounts of falling in love for the first time with another man were typical of the sensations reported when heterosexual love relationships first form (i.e., pounding heart, love at first sight, obsession with the beloved, focusing on only the desirable attributes of the partner etc.) In spite of having experienced a number of satisfactory sexual relationships with women, none of the subjects reported feeling the same sexual passion for women as they did for men.

Richard and Sean were also aware that their current male partners strongly reminded them of their fathers, and wondered if part of this attraction was related to the desire

to reconcile the ongoing pain they felt about their relationships with their fathers.

7. The Bisexual Option

As stated previously, the young men in this study sought counselling in order to explore sexual orientation issues. Because they had all had relationships with both females and males, they were experiencing considerable confusion as to their "true" sexual orientation. Richard and David had both enjoyed meaningful and gratifying relationships with women, both sexually and emotionally, in spite of the fact these lacked the intensity of their homosexual experiences.

Sean had also had relationships with women, although his seemed to be more unsatisfactory and were based primarily on a need to please his mother and to feel included in his peer group. Unlike Richard and David who continued to feel some sexual attraction for women, as well as a nostalgic longing for women they had been in love with, Sean appeared to feel no special fondness for his heterosexual experiences. Peter, who at one time functioned heterosexually with his wife, no longer engaged in sex with her due to his fears of transmitting HIV. On the other hand, of the four subjects, he seemed the most tormented by his dilemma and adamantly expressed his wish to become exclusively heterosexual.

What do these men have in common regarding bisexuality? I believe that bisexuality represents an option that allows each of them in their own way to cope with the intrapsychic conflict from which they are suffering. They all expressed deep longing for a "normal" existence, which to them included

having a wife and children. The bisexual option provides reassurance in that it allows options to remain open, and functions to relieve the acute sense of anxiety and despair they live with. Thus they can both maintain hope and the feeling that perhaps they can "have it all," thereby delaying the psychological stress of having to make a choice. In a sense then, the bisexual option provides the means by which they can hold back from a final admission to themselves that their "true" orientation might be homosexual.

In spite of the fact that all four admitted in the interviews that they were "probably gay," each subject clung to the idea that there existed somewhere a perfect "ideal woman" who would ultimately rescue them from their dilemma. This maternalistic fantasy woman represents the embodiment of the totally loving female - one who unconditionally accepts them as they are, who can provide them with emotional intimacy and the comfort of a "normal family life," yet who can both understand and tolerate their need for expressing their homosexual side. Indeed, although it seems Peter may have found just such a situation with his wife, he continues to suffer enormous guilt over secretly acting out his homosexual impulses. Therefore, while comforting themselves with the idea of a feminine rescuer, another inner voice senses the probable futility of this approach.

8. Struggle for Identity

These data suggest that ultimately, a sexual orientation crisis is experienced as a particularly difficult and unique form of identity crisis. These interviews captured a only a

part of a phenomenon that is essentially mysterious, dynamic and incomplete. It seems as if these young adult men are at war with themselves - painfully caught in an intrapsychic struggle between their inner and outer selves, between ambivalent longings and desires, between forces of the id, ego and superego, and between conflicting existential dilemmas. These competing forces are revealed in the interviews as they "yo-yo" back and forth, literally from one statement to the next, alternating between declaring themselves homosexual, and denying that this is the case.

I have called this pattern the "Yo-Yo Syndrome" to attempt to describe that this inner struggle is one that is experienced on a moment to moment basis. Indeed, it must be emotionally and spiritually exhausting to doubt from one moment to the next such a core aspect of one's identity.

Part of their dilemma stems from their tendency to denounce the very aspect of themselves that they are attempting to incorporate into their self-identity, that is, their homosexual side. It is as if the world of homosexuality is alien to their egos. From early childhood on, they have experienced shame, secrecy and confusion over this aspect of themselves - a part that now as an adult they feel pressured to acknowledge, not only privately to themselves but also publicly to others.

Stereotypically derogatory images of the "typical" gay lifestyle simultaneously intrigue and repulse them, and make it difficult for them to picture an identity for themselves in that imagined gay world. Their first sexual experiences

with males are often disappointing and cloaked with shame, yet the urge for homosexual sex remains perplexingly intense. They are mortified at being identified as gay by others, and reveal a contempt for those gay individuals who "flaunt it." They know too well society's prejudice against gay people since a part of they themselves shares that prejudice. To "come out" not only to themselves but to others may be a sacrifice too great for them to bear at the present time, since they realize that the cost of assuming a gay identity can be high both privately and publicly.

Accepting oneself as gay involves confronting early in one's existence some of life's challenging existential issues, such as fate versus choice, authenticity versus inauthenticity, hope versus despair, and the pain of renunciation versus the urge to partake in all that life offers. For the participants in this study, renunciation of the possibility of a "normal" life including wife and children seemed particularly difficult and painful, and possibly was a contributing factor in their need to identify themselves as bisexual rather than homosexual.

Conclusion

The composite picture of young men's experience of sexual orientation crisis is complex as evidenced by the findings in this study. Of the eight meta-level themes described above, one might argue they could all be subsumed under a more universal theme of sexual orienation confusion representing a major type of identity crisis. It is hard to imagine a more difficult dilemma in terms of what are often thought of as

necessary tasks of identity acquisition - a topic I shall more fully address in the concluding chapter.

I believe that the data in this study are valuable in and of themselves, because they poignantly illustrate, in a way which is lost in most of the questionnaire-type of studies, the depth of the agony and turmoil these young men are experiencing. The scholarly articles cited in the literature review delineating various models of homosexual identity acquisition, albeit theoretically sophisticated and comprehensive, fail to capture the full extent of the lived pain, confusion and grief involved in this crisis. Indeed, to hear that one subject (Peter) was so distressed about his sexual orientation confusion that he was seriously contemplating either castration or suicide, permits the reader to apprehend the immediate and acute nature of this phenomenon in a unique way. For not only therapists and counsellors working with these young men, but also in the interests of increasing compassion and tolerance by society at large, these data therefore, serve an important and revelatory function. In the following chapter, a more general discussion of some of the findings and their implications will be examined.

Chapter VI
Reflection

Introduction

This chapter examines the results of this study in relation to several topics: Firstly, I shall discuss the phenomenon of sexual orientation crisis from the general framework of identity issues; secondly, the results in relation to the literature review in Chapter II will be discussed; thirdly, implications for psychotherapy will be addessed: and fourthly, I shall offer suggestions for future research.

Sexual Orientation Crisis as Identity Crisis

The results of this study give support to Erik Erikson's (1959) social interactionist theory of identity development. Erikson, while affirming the position that "anatomy is destiny," recognized that social demands influence the ways in which the biologically determined psychosexual characteristics of a person develop. He first coined the term "identity crisis," and his views have influenced many theoretical perspectives on homosexuality (Friedman, 1988).

Erikson postulated that most bisexual men suffer from "identity diffusion," - that is, they have failed to achieve a stable self-concept during adolescence. The "Yo - Yo Syndrome" described earlier represents an example of identity diffusion by the way in which the subjects would alternate back and forth between thinking they were gay, bisexual or

straight. On the verge of "coming out" as self-defined homosexuals, the subjects would suddenly re-experience a surge of heterosexual fantasies. Then they would tentatively decide they were straight after all, only to have the homosexual fantasies recur. This inner struggle causes the identity crisis to be experienced as particularly intense, as is evidenced in the data of this study, preventing a stable sense of self from developing - the primary task of adolescence according to Erikson. Since he believed that each of the eight stages of development represented a potential crisis in development, successful resolution of each one was necessary to progress to the next stage (in this case, adulthood). For the subjects in this study, it seems clear that they have not yet fully achieved the major tasks of adolescent identity acquisition as evidenced by their descriptions inasmuch as they have not yet acquired a stable sense of self.

Another developmental theory that seems relevant to the findings of this study is Alan Malyon's (1982) biphasic model of homosexual identity formation. Malyon's model applies to only those males who experience strong homosexual impulses during adolescence, but who do not accept or integrate them until the third decade or later of life. In other words, his focus is not on those individuals who successfully accept a homosexual identity during late adolescence, nor is it on individuals who are predominantly heterosexual, yet experience occasional homosexual impulses. His cental concern is those men, in their twenties and beyond, who

continue to experience sexual orientation as a crisis.

Malyon's contention is that those in crisis in effect undergo not one but two adolescent developmental stages. First, the person who senses he might be homosexual yet cannot accept this possibility seems to undergo a "parody" of heterosexual development (Malyon, 1982, p.336). That is, due to his own negative feelings towards homosexuality as well as his peer group and society at large's abhorrence of homosexuality, he learns to supress and deny this side of himself, in effect adopting a false role as a heterosexual in order to cope. Although initially adaptive, as Malyon contends, this heterosexual persona is living on "borrowed time," for the existential drive for authenticity will eventually make itself felt, to be experienced later as a second kind of adolescence. As Malyon states:

> Coming out engenders a second major identity crisis and brings about a reactivation of many of the same developmental issues which were salient during primary adolescence ... The phenomenology of this developmental epoch is characterized by the disorienting and uncomfortable urgency of needs, conflicts, and priorities which have, in many instances, been latent for a decade or more (1982, p.338).

I believe the data in this study give strong support to Malyon's biphasic model. His theoretical model of the dilemma closely approximates the actual experiences of the subjects in this study, and could therefore serve as a useful

framework for developing a counselling model in working with other young men experiencing this crisis.

Results in Relation to the Literature Review

Apart from the above mentioned identity literature, there are a number of other findings in this study that will be discussed in relation to the literature review.

In terms of the issue of bisexuality, this study found that all four subjects, in spite of having the capacity for both heterosexual and homosexual relationships, nevertheless identified themselves as primarily homosexual in terms of sexual orientation. As stated previously, bisexuality is a topic clearly in need of further study. The literature is inconsistent and ambiguous. Some authors, echoing Freud's perspective, proclaim bisexuality as "a splendid compromise," suggesting that it is an example of our ingenuity and imaginative flexibility (Blumstein & Schwarz, 1977; Klein, 1978; Tripp, 1975); others, (Friedman, 1988; Isay, 1989; Kaplan & Saddock, 1990) attest to the fact that true bisexuality (50/50 preference) is in reality extremely rare. In this study, the subjects were clearly more intensely aroused by homosexual fantasies than heterosexual ones, in spite of the fact that the homosexual fantasies were often experienced as ego-alien. As Friedman (1988) points out: "Individuals equally aroused by imagery of males and females seem rare ... I have never seen a male patient who manifested equal preferences for males and females as a stable trait over time" (p.127). The results of the present study suggest that bisexuality for these subjects is an option that is

adopted as a means of reducing the intense psychic conflict experienced by these young men, and does not therefore for them represent a "true" a sexual orientation in its own right. Whether or not this is true for the general population who identify themselves as bisexual remains to be empirically clarified.

In terms of the essentialist/constructionist debate, the subjects themselves attested to the idea that they believed homosexuality was part of their essential core identity - part of whom they had "always been." Recent research appears to be providing increasingly compelling evidence for a biological substrate to sexual orientation and these findings support the reports of clinicians who work with gay individuals, as well as those of gay people themselves. Indeed, in the course of my work with numerous homosexual males, I have yet to encounter one single individual who did not feel strongly that homosexuality, far from being a "choice," was rather a biologically based aspect of his very being.

John Money, probably the most noted researcher today in the science of sexology, is adamant that one cannot "choose" one's sexual orientation any more than one can "choose" the colour of one's hair or eyes. The term "sexual preference" is, according to Money, a moral and political term implying voluntary choice. Politically, it becomes a dangerous term, for it "implies that if homosexuals choose their preference, then they can be legally forced , under threat of punishment, to choose to be heterosexual" (Money, 1988, p.11) If indeed

a biological substrate to sexual orientation can be incontrovertibly proven, it is hoped that the effect will be to increase tolerance and compassion for homosexuals who, at this time, remain socially isolated, and denied of many basic human rights.

Finally, I shall comment upon father/son, mother/son relationships and how the findings in this study relate to the literature with respect to this topic. Bieber et al.'s oft-quoted (1962) study attempted to establish an environmental explanation for the development of homosexuality. Interestingly, all of the major environmental hypotheses he set out to investigate, including the one that the mothers of homosexual males were inclined to be overly controlling and manipulative, failed to be statistically supported in his study, with one notable exception. Bieber et al. did find conclusive statistical support for the existence of "a uniformity of seriously defective father/son relationships among male homosexuals ... as a group the homosexual fathers were detached, hostile, minimizing and openly rejecting" (p.85).

It is clear from the data in the present study that the four subjects reported similarly dysfunctional relationships with their fathers. Indeed, it is one of the major themes. It's possible however, that far from casting doubt over the recent biological research, this phenomenon rather serves to add credence to it, and so I shall offer some speculation as to how this could be the case. Generally, all four subjects' earliest memories of their fathers were positive, yet by

middle childhood they had changed to being overwhelmingly negative. Rather than the hostile, distant father "causing" his son to become homosexual, I suggest a more likely explanation might be the following: By the time a prehomosexual boy reaches middle childhood, it is plausible the father becomes slowly aware that his son is somehow "different" from other boys and perhaps different too from his other sons. Initially this awareness is subtle and probably unconscious on the father's part, yet the result is a gradual but inevitable emotional distancing of himself from his son. It may be that some fathers can sense emerging prehomosexality in their sons by middle childhood, and this in turn may cause them to experience confusion and fear with regards to their role as a father. The result is the documented dysfunctional father/son relationship described in the literature. While admitting that this explanation remains speculative, as a hypothesis it seems sufficiently tenable to merit further research.

With regards to their mothers, the data in this study also appear to confirm a certain stereotype - that of the overcontrolling, emotionally-enmeshed and somewhat neurotic mother who is closer to her son than to her husband. In spite of the fact that this mother/son pattern was not statistically supported in the (1962) Bieber research, all four subjects nevertheless reported this dynamic in their relationships with their mothers. Again, it is possible that this phenomenon is primordially a function of first nature, then nurture, and I offer the following as a tentative

explanation: Mothers tend in general to be nurturing of their offspring. This serves an important survival function for the species. When the mother of a prehomosexual boy senses that her son is rejected by his father, I believe her instinct quite naturally leads her to nurture by trying to compensate for the emotional pain she intuitivley senses her son is enduring. She too senses he is "different," but rather than distancing and withdrawing, as is the case with the father, this has the opposite effect of drawing her closer to her son. The result of this dynamic could account for the stereotypical mother-son image reported in some of the literature, which future research may also help to clarify.

Implications for Psychotherapy

Every year in the United States, more than 5,000 young people between the ages of 16 and 25 take their own lives. According to the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, fully 30 percent of those suicides are directly related to the emotional turmoil over sexual orientation (Macleans, September 12, 1992). While there are no comparable Canadian studies, there is little reason to believe that the situation is any different in Canada. Caught in this dilemma, a young man can find himself quite alone, utterly bewildered by the direction in which his emerging sexuality is heading. If the above figures are accurate, it is imperative that this topic be brought to the attention of teachers, physicians, counsellors and therapists, and that effective strategies for counselling be

developed.

For the public, sexual orientation as a topic for reasoned dialogue remains "in the closet." Most often, it becomes an emotionally-laden controversy similar to the abortion debate, one often based on fear and ignorance. A few psychiatrists continue to claim they can "cure" homosexuality, (e.g., Cappon, 1965), in spite of the fact that there has not been a single verified case of someone permanently having a homosexual orientation changed as a result of psychotherapy (Friedman, 1988; West, 1955).

More enlightened clinicians are focusing on areas where they can be of genuine help (Colgan, 1987; Gershman, 1983; Isay, 1989; Wolf and Klein, 1987.) In my own clinical experience in dealing with sexual orientation issues, I maintain that first and foremost, the overriding responsibility of the therapist is to provide a safe and completely non-judgemental therapeutic environment in which the client can freely explore the complex issues with which he is struggling. Therapists working in this area must obviously reflect carefully upon their own feelings about sexuality and come to terms with any of their own homophobic attitudes, before embarking upon therapy with clients with sexual orientation issues. A Rogerian stance which expresses positive regard and affirmation must be provided by the counsellor if there is to be an atmosphere where the client may safely understand and untangle the negative self-image he has frequently acquired during childhood and adolescence - a self-image that is most often the combined result of paternal

rejection, social discrimination and peer stigmatization, internalized homophobia, and the stress of the coming-out process itself (Isay, 1989).

School counsellors could play a far more active and supportive role in helping these young people than is currently the case. The subjects in this study suffered intensely from a sense of complete isolation with regards to their dilemma. There seemed to be no "safe" person available for them to talk to, a factor that undoubtedly accounts for the high suicide rates among these young people. Education seems to hold the key to at least partially eradicating the prejudice and homophobia that is still so prevalent in society. If the topic of sexual orientation could be discussed more openly and compassionately in our schools, and if school counsellors could make themselves seen as more approachable on this issue, these young people might be helped towards resolving their sexual identity issues in a less secretive and shame-invoking atmosphere. Ideally, peer support groups could be offered in high schools to young people, male and female who currently suffer alone and unsupported.

There are other important reasons for advocating this more open educational approach, not the least of which relates to the current global AIDS epidemic. It is suspected that one of the groups that represent the greatest risk for spreading the HIV virus are adult bisexual males. These individuals, largely hidden from view, are frequently married men who engage in promsicuous and highly risky homosexual

encounters, often with young gay male prostitutes. One of the subjects in my study represents one such individual. Peter's dilemma took the form of a sexual addiction problem which represented such a crisis for him that he frequently felt suicidal. According to the figures presented earlier on the estimated incidence of bisexual activity among the adult male population, one could safely assume that there exist many such "Peters" who continue high risk sexual practices in order to avoid dealing with the potential loss of their families and careers. It is imperative that we offer effective assistance and counselling to such individuals in order to help curb the spread of the AIDS epidemic.

Implications for Further Research

There are several possibilities for further research based upon the findings of this study: First, there is a need for longtitudinal studies of children who do not obviously manifest childhood gender disturbance, but who nevertheless become predominantly or exclusively homosexual as adults. Zuger (1984) has already found that childhood effeminacy invariably precedes predominant adult homosexuality, but the characteristics of the non-gender-disturbed group remain to be described. One key indicator of eventual sexual orientation and a theme which is clearly manifest in this study, relates to the importance identifying sexual fantasies. Research designed to describe or track the development of erotic fantasy in children and adolescents might prove to be an illuminating challenge for a further phenomenological study.

Secondly, another question requiring systematic investigation concerns the prevalence of depression in gender disturbed youngsters. As Friedman (1988) states: "The existential plight of these children is often so painful that clinical depression should be expected to occur among them" (p.201). Childhood depression has been understudied in this group, and awaits future clarification.

Thirdly, the four subjects in this study each found unique strategies for coping with their dilemma (another major theme). It would be interesting to study coping styles further, since these boys, although symptomatic, all continued to function, and most fairly well. Possibly, for reasons that this study has begun to describe, the coping mechanisms developed in prehomosexual boys may be unusually effective.

Finally, further phenomenological research on the father/son, mother/son relationships outlined in this study might help clarify the nature versus nurture hypotheses presented earlier regarding the complex and subtle dynamics of these relationships. If a clearer picture could be had of these often dysfunctional parent/son relationships, counsellors and therapists might be more effective in developing stategies for helping these individuals and their families with the unique problems that challenge them.

Concluding Remarks

The purpose of this research was to investigate the experience of sexual orientation crisis in four young adult

men using existential-phenomenological methodology. This study begins to fill the void which has abandoned the young men in such a crisis to often years of solitary turmoil and limited self-understanding. Ideally, it will provide others who share this experience and the therapists who work with them with a sense of common experience and deeper understanding.

Ultimately, an individual's identification as a heterosexual, bisexual or homosexual must come from him or herself in terms of healthy psychological functioning, regardless of what "scientific" studies may eventually discover regarding the etiology of sexual orientation. Perhaps we may never fully understand all the complex biopsychosocial factors that are intrinsic to this mysterious yet essential human phenomenon.

Postscript

The interviews for this study were collected three years ago during counselling sessions with the four subjects. Since that time, Richard, Sean and David have individually contacted me and informed me that they believe they have completed the coming out process and now define themselves as gay. They report they are now quite comfortable with this identity, both privately and publicly. A recent follow-up interview with Peter revealed that he continues to live with his wife and son and to engage in anonymous homosexual encounters. He reports he is still in crisis and for him the issue remains unresolved.

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